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LETTERS

FROM

MRS. ELIZABETH CARTER,

TO

MRS. MONTAGU,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1755 AND 1800.

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CHIEFLY UPON LITERARY AND MORAL SUBJECTS.

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PUBLISHED FROM THE
ORIGINALS IN THE POSSESSION
OF THE

REV. MONTAGU PENNINGTON, M.A.

VICAR OF NORTHBOURN IN KENT, AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, DEAL, HER NEPHEW AND EXECUTOR.

NN-f-4

Digni sunt amicitia, quibus in ipsis inest causa cur diligantur.
CIC. DE AMICIT.

Extremum hunc—mihi concede laborem.—VIRG.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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LETTERS TO MRS. MONTAGU.

LETTER CXCVI.

Deal, *August* 8, 1776.

I AM resolved not to let a post pass, my dear friend, without thanking you for your kind and welcome letter, I therefore write in defiance of a fit of the head-ach, brought on, I suppose, by the day, which is agitated by all the storms and fury of December.

It made me very happy to find your health was so much mended by your change of abode *, for your last letter from Paris had made me very uneasy; but I am now convinced that it was only the air of that close suffocating city which made you so ill. I must beg of you to feel a greater tenderness for my care of mind, than for my

* From Paris, to a very delightful and pleasant residence at Chaillot.

pocket, and never again suffer the consideration of postage to prevent my hearing from you when you feel inclined to favor me with a letter. You might surely be the less scrupulous on this article, if you did not forget, what I every day find reason to remember by many an additional comfort, how well you have enabled me to pay for that indulgence and many others. I do not wish you to write me long letters, which might be inconvenient to you so much as you are engaged; only let me know how you do, and for other subjects my curiosity will very contentedly wait till I have the happiness to receive the whole history from you *de vive voix*.

My nephew, in all his letters home, speaks with great gratitude of the kindness you have shewn him, and for which I trust he will ever be grateful. The reform you mention in his manner of speaking, will be very advantagous to him. Dr. Pennington speaks so rapidly, that all the boys have been hurt in their elocution, by continually listening to him. However they have gained so much in the most essential points, by having been constantly under the inspection of such excellent parents, that their friends ought to be the more easy under this defect, though it is very desirable that it should be cured; for a good elocution is perhaps of all the graces the

most

most useful and important, to whatever profession they may be hereafter destined. The Doctor and Mrs. Pennington join their warmest acknowledgments to mine for your kindness to our equally dear boy. He gives a very good account to his mother of your kind Swiss servant first hoisting Master Montagu, and then him on his shoulders to see the funeral procession of the Prince de Conti. And likewise of their having teachers to overlook them, while they are at play; it is very much to be wished that the same kind of attention was practised in our great schools.

I hope there was not any body for whom you are particularly interested in the terrible action near Charles Town; indeed, without any immediate cause of concern, one cannot help feeling a great deal for the distresses of those who have lost their husbands, and fathers, and friends, in this dreadful quarrel. God grant a speedy end to such devastation and ruin.

Surely Francis I. with all his faults, had something too noble in his mind to allow him to be guilty of so unworthy a piece of casuistry. Such a trait *de caractère* would have been very suitable to the little quibbling petty fogging genius of his antagonist *. But you know the

* The Emperor Charles V.

Chateau de Madrid has another reason assigned for its name.

I do not recollect any thing to tell you by way of *news*, as of course you have the papers. You will be glad to hear that Mrs. Fielding is safe in bed with a third daughter, notwithstanding all the old dowagers and medical men declared it was to be a son; but she, like a true Christian, is well satisfied that it has pleased God to send her child into the world, with all its limbs perfect, and as far as one can judge in such infancy, all its senses; what a blessing it would be, were all mothers equally reasonable. What is become of our Sylph I know not, and probably she hardly knows herself, for her motions have been very undetermined lately.

My love to our nephews and Miss Gregory. I am glad the dear boys are so well lodged, and their hearts comforted with roast meat. They are both very temperate, but good plain food is an absolute necessary, and by far more wholesome for young people. I am glad your *concierge* at Chaillot provides better for you, than your *maître d'hotel* did at Paris. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CXCVII.

Mill Hill, *September* 19, 1776.

It was not till near a fortnight after it was written, that I had the pleasure of receiving your letter, as Miss Sharpe was detained at Calais several days by contrary winds. I am delighted to find you are so much better, and hope the air of Chaillot will continue to agree with you.

I come here with Miss Sharpe to spend ten days, four of which I have been in my bed, but am, thank God, quite comfortable to-day, and therefore was determined to write to you. This country, or rather the spot to which I have been confined, is as beautiful as ground, and trees, and verdure can make it. But all this forms only a single picture, of which I always grow soon tired; and my imagination looks back with transport to East Kent, where a clear horizon shews me the rising and the setting sun. Where open corn fields, intermixed with wooded villages, and a view of the sea, form a landscape infinitely more various from the objects themselves, and acquiring a new and perpetual variety

variety from the unconfined effects of light and shade.

There is one particular disadvantage attending the fields within reach of London, that as they are chiefly appropriated to the production of hay, they are not enlivened by the grazing of animals, and I never at any time could feel pleased with still life.

What a poor wretched dirty snuff of the candle is that abusive paper which you enclosed of Voltaire! neither wit, nor criticism, nor any thing but mere spiteful illiberal scolding. Our papers are full of advertisements of answers to Mr. S. Jenyns's book, which I am sorry to see; for though I think it not unexceptionable, yet, as upon the whole, it might catch the attention of those who would not look into a more voluminous work, and might lead them to a farther enquiry; it is vexatious to see any attempt to depreciate it: I hear that at the fashionable clubs it is gold to silver, since the appearance of Mr. Jenyns's book, that the Christian religion is true. These, alas! are not the people to whom its being true will convey any advantage. Indeed, there is something in this impious levity, strangely shocking to one's mind.

I had a letter lately from Lady Dartrey, who is amused by the society at Spa; but declares that

that never did she love her English friends so much as since she has been among foreigners. She is extremely charmed by the romantic scenery of the Sauveniere, to which she retires for two hours in the morning Do you remember how much we delighted in this spot, and how we enjoyed the sitting there, till the rain drove us away, as I fear it must poor Lady Dartrey, if the weather is as unfavorable there as it is here. If it is as perverse in the environs of Paris, I hope it will soon blow and rain you out of a French house, which admits the elements a free passage into every door and window, and oblige you to take shelter by your own dear fire-side in Hill-street.

Miss Sharpe desires me to present her compliments to you, and to let you know as a caution, that Madame le Ray has played her a strange trick. She was so good as to bring me a cap and ruffles, which not coming till just as she was leaving Paris, she had not time to examine; but she now finds they are of different kinds, and not equally good as the pattern. As I valued it chiefly as a mark of her kind attention, it is probable I should not have found it out, if she had not; but we thought it right to let you know that you might be put on your guard, that neither you nor your friend may be served the same trick.

trick. I shall be at Deal on Thursday at the latest, and hope I shall find letters from those I most love. My brother and sister return next week, after their long absence; their being at Deal is always a great delight to me. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CXCVIII.

Deal, *October* 6, 1776.

In the first place, my dear friend, in respect of your having said a silly thing, in having said that you would leave my nephew at Mrs, Burnsal's (a various reading which you have found in some old MS. in the University of Paris for Mrs. Brumsal) I do flatly and plainly affirm, that you did not say a silly thing, as my said nephew is not to go to Dunstan (another various reading for Tunstal) to his father and mother, but to me his natural aunt at Deal, where, I hope, they will catch a sight of him, as they are at present at my brother's. I propose to keep him with me till I go to town, as this air is so much better for him, than that wretched atmosphere filled with blue agues.

I am

I am indebted to you two letters, but I cannot thank you as I would wish for either of them. I am such a poor wretch that I am fit for nothing but to sit down and sleep, or sit down and cry, or do any other idle or foolish thing; in consequence of the languor succeeding two days bad head ache, much increased by a good deal of unavoidable exertion. In the midst of all this depression however, my heart rejoices in the near prospect of your return to England, and I shall be quite happy when I can feel you are at no greater distance from me than Hill-street. God grant you, and your dear companions, and all your suite a safe journey and voyage. I have desired Captain Osborn to let me know, when he can tell, what day you appoint him to be at Calais. For I certainly shall attempt to get a glimpse of you while you are at Dover; if I should be so unfortunate as to fail in my purpose, be so kind as to leave my nephew at Mrs. Brumsal's, and we will send for him as soon as we know he is there; I hope he will get a sight of his brothers, who are both here at present. The Doctor and Mrs. Pennington I hope and trust are likely to be rewarded by the behaviour and good conduct of their children, for the unwearied pains they have taken in their education. I am happy to say both the young men have most excellent

excellent characters at the University, both for learning and good conduct; the eldest next spring is to take his master's degree *. And the kind manner in which you speak of the youngest makes me hope that when the time comes, he will not fall short of his brothers.

Notwithstanding the French intelligence of our defeat, it is very certain that no news of any action has yet arrived from the Howes. By the last accounts to government, it is to be feared there are very little hopes of any accommodation. I heartily join in your prayer, and think with you that all but peace is ruin. Adieu, my dearest friend, I long to hear of your safe arrival. You had my warmest wishes, my more than wishes, of *multos et felices* on the second.

* Before that time, as has been mentioned before, it pleased God to remove him from this world. Of the other son here spoken of, then at Trinity College, Cambridge, and now Rector of Thorley in Hertfordshire, and of Kingsdown in Kent, the Editor's elder and only brother, it would not become him, as he is still living, to speak in those terms of respect and commendation in which alone he could mention his name.

LETTER CXCIX.

Deal, *October* 29, 1776.

By this time, my dear friend, I hope I may congratulate on an end of your long journeys, and on your return to the comforts and conveniences of your own abode. I heartily hope that some fair autumnal days may still delay the winter, long enough for you to recruit your spirits in the quiet shades of Sandleford.

"Sit modus lassæ maris et viarum."

Indeed, according to my own ideas, this would not appear the worst part of the fatigue, after residing so many months in the neighbourhood of Paris; but I am a mere English woman, a Goth, &c. &c. However this be, I hope you will be enabled to lay in a sufficient quantity of health and spirits, to rejoice the hearts of your friends in London, by the time they are assembled for the winter.

You may well be contented to suspend your claim to the laurels of Parnassus, and the acclamations of the world, while you are pursuing a task which promises for its reward, the unfading wreaths of Paradise, and the approbation of that Judge,

Judge, whose *euge* confers an incontestable title to immortality and to happiness. I am very happy to find that, with the inclination of becoming a blessing to the helpless and distrest, it pleases God to encrease your power. One must feel one of the highest joys of which the human heart is capable, in the prosperity of a friend, on every occasion in which it becomes an immediate instrument of virtue.

The poor in our neighbourhood, God be thanked, are by no means in so wretched a state as those in your environs; and the children sprawling on the thresholds of our cottages look fat and tidy. In the town, most of our objects of distress, are rendered such, alas! by their own wickedness and extravagance, for they have great resources, such as they are, but that often proves the cause of their misery. The sudden and immoderate gain which they derive from an unlawful trade renders them luxurious, and luxury renders them poor. The danger likewise to which they are exposed, sometimes deprives a whole family of its support among the more sober and industrious. We had lately a sad instance of this sort, by a boat oversetting, in which four out of six men were lost. Among the last, was one a remarkably good and kind husband and father; and of the two that were saved, one is a

profligate

profligate and brute of the first class; and yet this wretch has been twice before saved, almost by a miracle. I was much pleased the next day to hear at Chapel, the thanks of his companion for his preservation, but no such acknowledgment was there from him.

What a shocking, though unhappily a very common instance of inhumanity is it in the Justices *, to deny all relief to the poor, except on the cruel condition of stripping them of all their little property! To people not totally bad, a small assistance might give support and spirit to industry, while the labourer can rest after his toils beneath a roof, and amidst the poor furniture which he can call his own. But all vigour of mind and body must relax under the depressing idea of total dependance on others.

You would suppose naturally there was some particular reason for the enquiry I made in my last, and I am much obliged to you for your information. All the little acquaintance I have

* Mrs. Carter did not consider, or perhaps did not know, that the power of the Justices, with respect to granting relief to the poor, is limited by strict rules of law. They may recommend to parishes to assist their poor while they have some property remaining, but have no power to give such an order. They are placed in a difficult situation between the poor and the parish, and generally make both parties dissatisfied.

with

with the lady in question, was from the desire of a person to whom I would not willingly deny any request of this sort, which it was not unreasonable to grant, for I by no means wish, in general, to visit strangers who come to this place, unless from some particular recommendation, as I can find full employment for all the time which I am able to make use of. The account which my friend gave me of this lady was this: that she herself had been extremely prejudiced against her character, by the accounts she had heard, and had forborne taking notice of her, till she had made the strictest enquiry in town; the result of which was, that the person in question had behaved very irreproachably during the life of her husband; that since his death she had been guilty of very blameable levity and imprudence, but had never been accused of any thing criminal; that she was treated with great regard by her husband's family, and that she acted very nobly in appropriating a part of a very small fortune to the payment of debts, to which she was not legally subject. On this account my friend entered more cordially into her acquaintance, and, after fairly giving me the above account, recommended it to me; and I am persuaded you have too much humanity and candour to blame me for not thinking such a representation sufficient to justify

justify a total rejection of a character, though it ought to keep one under certain restrictions, and upon one's guard. With profligate principles and vicious morals, it would be guilt to associate; but the weakness of sickly and imperfect virtue, might perhaps often be recovered by the support it might receive from society with more fixed and regular characters; which may often be necessary, till it can establish itself upon a better and surer foundation. Upon this motive my friend and myself took more notice of her, and if, by our feeble endeavours, and our countenancing her, she may be enabled to walk in the steady paths of virtue, we shall, I am certain, always feel that we have done what is right, and what every Christian ought to do. You may rest assured that the information I got from you will never be revealed to any one, but the friend who first mentioned her to me.

Dr. Fothergill has sent his sister here to bathe, she is as absolute a Quaker as himself, but I think less stiff, and a very sensible woman. She drank tea with me yesterday, and exprest herself much pleased to see *friend Carter* again after the distance of twenty-five years; since which she, in the stillness of Quakerism, do s not look a day older, whilst I amongst the bustle of this worky-day world am advanced half a century.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear friend, we cannot send you half the thanks we ought for all your kindness to my nephew, who says he shall be most happy to hear from his dear friend Montagu.

LETTER CC.

Deal, *November* 23, 1776.

THE postscript of your letter, my dearest friend, sadly reversed the pleasure I had received at the beginning of it, in finding you in such comfortable hopes of the recovery of the Archbishop *. I am glad, however, that you are to come to town, where your spirits will be more likely to be relieved by the society of our dear Sylph and your other friends, than in the solitude of the country. To a vacant heart and cheerful disposition, the soft melancholy of autumnal scenes is a very pleasing repose; but the view of faded woods and falling leaves, is not a good remedy for the depression of grief.

I am much obliged to you for the paper you was so good as to enclose, and heartily congratu-

* Of York.

late

late you on Mr. Burrow's testimony, which, I think, contains all that your heart can wish for your nephew. By your account of our dear Mrs. Vesey, I hope her health is not worse than usual; and I fear we must not entertain any expectations of its growing much better. As it is, I hope it is rather tiresome and unpleasant to her at times, than dangerous, and I trust we may all go on, upon the whole, pretty comfortably for some years longer; and may it be with such improvements of the remainder of life, whatever it be, as may reunite us in a world where no future separation impends over the present enjoyment.

I had not heard of the curious device of Cupid and Pysche. I am glad to hear it now, as it is so very different from a report that was circulated some time ago. The little harmless fooleries of people who love each other may make the world laugh, but are pleasant enough to themselves, to make them full amends for the ridicule of the witty, and the contempt of the grave.

I have lately been reading some of the Poems of Ossian, and was struck by a singularity which I never remarked before, that, among such an innumerable multitude of similies, there are scarcely any that are taken from animals. I think, in what I have been reading, absolutely none, except from the eagle. Did you ever take

notice of this particularly? And whence does it arise? Is it that the great objects of wild unanimated nature, when put into motion, strike a sublime imagination with greater force than the more regular action of living creatures, which follow a uniform law, and consequently makes a weaker impression, than the sudden changes produced on the face of nature, by the violent and apparently irregular operation of the elements? This would be particularly the case in a region where they seem to exert all their powers with such unbounded freedom.

I am glad to hear that Mrs. James's son is in so good a situation. What a terrible act of villainy was the setting New York on fire! One does not wonder that the troops, in the first fury of such a provocation, should inflict an immediate punishment on all the authors of it who fell into their hands. Such desperate wretches must always, in some way or other, be dangerous to human society.

We have press-warrants come down here backed by a precept from the Lord Warden; but our magistrates refuse to back them; and will suffer none to be taken on shore, but such as they themselves find to be proper persons. As their protection does not extend to the sea, all our fishermen keep snug on the land, to the great

great dismay of all people, who set their minds on whitings and sprats, of which there is not one to be got.

From the displeasure which Princess Daschow exprest at her reception, the last time she was in England, one should not have expected her return. But, poor woman, she must be somewhere, and she cannot be at home. One of my friends was well acquainted with her abroad, and spoke favorably of her. Would you suppose that a lady capable of such a part as she acted, should have very weak nerves? "Ambition should be made of sterner stuff." But, perhaps, her weak nerves, may be the effect of the action. Take care of yourself, my dear friend, and pray let me have a better account of you very soon. Ever yours, &c.

LETTER CCI.

Deal, *December* 21, 1776.

INDEED, my dear friend, with such an irregular life and conversation as you describe, it is more to be regretted than wondered at, that you should feel its effect in a fit of the head-ach.

But you will think me ill qualified to preach on this subject, with a head which does so little honor to a sober quiet *train de vie*. A few years ago, all the *bons vivans* in this part of Kent hugged themselves, and drank an additional bottle, and eat an additional dish, on the report that my sister Carter, who lived upon whey and boiled chicken, was confined by a fit of the gout.

I was much obliged to you for your kind mention of our alarm. The shock, I see by the papers, was felt strongly at Calais, and a person who was there at the time brought an account of it to this place; with the addition that the Priests summoned the whole town to Mass. I cannot be quite of the opinion you mention, with regard to the effect of such alarms, which, I believe, seldom produce any reformation in the wicked, but, like all the other dispensations of heaven, are useful to the well-intentioned, and to the good. The best are too often liable to slumber over the duties of their post, and need an alarming call to awaken them to the danger of every relaxation of their vigilance.

You do not mention the Archbishop of York nor do the papers, so I imagine he has still a chance for recovery. I wish it may prove so. Is it not strange that no authentic news is yet come

come from America? People who love peace, are the more impatient in the hope of a confirmation, that the Provincials are tired of a war which so miserably harasses their country. The story of the Amazonian gentlewoman, who took some of the provincial prisoners, is very true, as I am told from private accounts. If American Mrs. Wright* was there, it is not impossible she might return the compliment.

I am obliged to you for the King of Prussia's Epitaph, which is a pretty good epigram. One may, however, I think, object to the expression of "*il charme les mortels,*" for his manners are said to be disagreeable, and what I have happened to see of his writings, *tres mediocre.*

I have lately been reading Tacitus, and have just read the death of Otho; there is scarcely a greater inconsistency in history, than that the same person should live as Otho did, and die like Cato. Indeed there is so very striking a resemblance in all the circumstances of the last actions of both, that there is a strong appearance that the one was a studied affectation of the other. And yet no affectation ever yet procured an hour of quiet sleep. Even Otho's life, bad as

* A celebrated modeller in wax, born in America, and warmly attached to her country, who had resided for some time in London.

it was, gains some advantage, by being placed so near the more stupid and contemptible wickedness of Vitellius, who tumbled into a great empire like a ponderous log, and knocked down all in his way, by mere, dull, inanimate weight. With what unfeeling stupidity did this monster survey the recent calamities of that field of battle, whose very description, after so many centuries, cannot be read without the strongest emotions of compassion and horror!

My brother and sister are returned after a very delightful ramble, and make me wild by their descriptions of the objects they have seen in their progress. Amongst other sights my sister has particularly raised my curiosity by her account of Arundel Castle, which she is persuaded gave Mr. Walpole the idea of the Castle of Otranto. The great sword is still there, whatever may have become of the helmet.

I have not seen any answer to Mr. Gibbon, nor indeed have I ever seen Mr. Gibbon himself.

A Frenchman, who is neither a philosopher nor a *petit maître*, is indeed quite a curiosity, and I congratulate you on such a prize. By the description which you give of the Ambassador, the visits to that house, must be a much more agreeable entertainment to you, than when it

was

was owned by some of the frippery, dancing, smuggling things, which the French Court has sometimes sent to amuse our masters and misses, and scandalize people of sober sense.

There can be, I suppose, no doubt of the general good success in America, as, since I wrote the above, Mr. Benjamin called on me and gave me the following account, which he received from the masters of several transports just arrived in the Downs, and they all agree in the same story. They say there has been a severe engagement; that many of the Provincials were killed; that they have been obliged to quit their post; and that they were blockading their own Congress, vowing that not a man shall stir, till they are brought out of the difficulties in which the said Congress has involved them. Common ship-news is so very suspicious, that I know not how far this intelligence may be credited. If the last particular be true, there is something in it very comic; and what is better, it must, most probably, force the Congress into a peace. But I fear there is nothing in it. Sir William Howe's order for the clothing of the deserters, seems perfectly necessary, for, by the accounts of the provincial soldiers, they seem to be attired pretty much like Sir John Falstaff's regiment.

I propose to leave this place on Thursday next, and

and to be in town on Saturday, and hope by that time to find you have perfectly recovered your excesses, and that I shall find you quite well.

LETTER CCII.

Deal, *July* 20, 1777.

Indeed, my dear friend, you who seldom get a sight of the ocean, cannot admire it more than I do, who observe it from my window every hour in the day; and every hour it wears some new appearance, if it be only from the various colourings it receives from the shifting clouds. At this moment it is displaying all the grandeur of a storm; and the waves of the Goodwin Sands, which terminate our prospect, are dashing against the clouds. This view, I confess, would be more natural, and more pleasant in December, than in July. Last night—oh! your poor hay!—we had a deluge of rain, with the wind strong in the North-east. To-day it is still stronger at South-west. When it has spent its fury from all points of the compass, perhaps it

it may settle into a calm. *A-propos* of the sea, the Greeks have an epithet for it, which the interpreters, with as little justice as taste, translate *unfruitful;* because, say they very gravely, the sea does not produce any vineyards. Now this same word, by another derivation, without any forced construction, signifies *unwearied* and *indefatigable* *, and forms an epithet of the highest propriety and beauty. This is one amongst many other differences between the study of mere words, and of words as signifying things.

I have no other partiality for the Athenians than that it appears, I think, that their faults were more from sudden impulse, and less upon principle, than those of the Lacedemonians. Their behaviour to their commanders at Arginusæ was indeed detestable; but consider that their first emotion, by which unhappily they always acted, was compassion, and regret for those who died in their service, and who were deprived of the

* Ἀτρυγέτοιο; it occurs twice in the Iliad, and is translated by Clarke, *infructuosi* (unfruitful;) and once in the Odyssey, in the accusative case, where he renders it *indomitum* (untamed.) The Scholiast, however, explains it, as Mrs. Carter does, by the word Ἀκαματοῦντα, *unwearied;* but adds, or, as some say, *unfruitful.* Which last, with great deference to Mrs. Carter's learning, seems to be the true meaning of the word. Pope translates it *barren,* but his authority is of no value.

rites

rites of burial, which in their ideas was a point of the highest importance *. The most astonishing circumstance in this whole transaction, is the wicked accusation of Theramenes, who, on other occasions, appeared to be a man of bravery and virtue. But the courage which is kindled by enthusiasm in a battle, is very different from the calm intrepidity produced by fixed principles of duty.

I ramble from Greece to Peru, just as things come into my head. You wonder that no idolators ever worshipped the ocean. When the Peruvian reformer proposed to some of the provinces his new object of adoration, they replied that they did not want the sun for their god, for they already worshipped the sea, which was bigger.

Did you ever observe within your memory such a madness, of petitioning as in a late unhappy case? We seem to be getting into the character of the Athenians, and instead of acting

* After the naval engagement at Arginusæ, in the Peloponnesian war, some of the Athenians who were shipwrecked were lost. This was imputed by Theramenes to their admiral's neglect; and six of them, out of eight who were condemned, were actually put to death. Theramenes himself was afterwards condemned by the thirty tyrants, and obliged to drink poison. In both cases, Socrates exerted all his influence against these unjust sentences.

upon

upon general principles, to be moved only, as Lord Bacon expresses it, " by the spur of the occasion." Instead of all this exertion for one particular individual *, it is much to be wished there might be some representation made in a proper manner to the legislature, to change the law, which is found so very insufficient to prevent the evil, that it is perpetually increasing. Imprisonment, labour, and restitution, so far as it could be made, would, I believe, by its being a constant object, be more efficacious than hanging, which is presently forgot.

I heard Lady Huntingdon's letter to Dr. Dodd read, and as far as we could disentangle the sense from a strange perplexity of language, the meaning seemed to be, an exhortation to a quiet submission to his punishment, which would be a more excellent sermon than he had ever preached; and this meaning was a good one; but by what you say, we were mistaken. Have you read his last paper? It must have given comfort to your humanity that the poor man was brought to so proper a disposition. There was nothing ostentatious or affected in it, but all was a natural ex-

* Dr. Dodd; a disgrace to his profession and religion; the petitions in whose favour were more creditable to the humanity than to the justice and good sense of those who signed them.

pression

pression of a heart deeply impressed with the sense of so awful a situation. Some part of it may, it is to be hoped, help to prevent the mischief that might arise from the opposition of his life to the doctrines which he preached.

As we have lately been very much engaged in the affairs of ancient Greece, pray did it never strike you, that during the long subsistence of the Lacedemonian state, it should, from Lycurgus to Agesilaus, scarcely have produced any one character distinguished from the rest of his countrymen; while so many illustrious names adorn the history of Athens, all essentially differing from each other by various talents and dispositions! A necessary consequence, I suppose, of the difference between mere institution, and a natural exertion of the powers of the mind. Sparta was a single machine, wound up and regulated by clock-work springs. Athens was all alive, and running into various directions by voluntary motion.

I hope it was rather a compunction of conscience than the want of a frank, that prevented your extending a discussion to the disadvantage of a person, to whom the world is so much obliged as to Mr. Locke. You say, that you "always thought him more admired than he deserved." To draw the comparison betwixt him, and the subsequent

subsequent writers, who have availed themselves of his talents, to improve upon him, is not doing him justice. If you will take your stand at the point from whence he sat out, I am persuaded he must appear, to a discernment like your's, worthy of the highest honor, in spite of Mr. Prior's wicked wit. Consider what must have been the force and splendour of that genius which could break through the cloud of long-established error; which freed the human mind from the fetters of artificial reasoning, and cleared the way for its return to the universal principles of common sense, which had so long been lost beneath the rubbish of scholastic sophistry. Under so many difficulties as he had to encounter, it is much more wonderful that he could go so far, than that he went no further. But I am getting strangely out of my depth in the vindication of an author whom I have never looked into since I was almost a child. However, besides the general idea I have remaining upon my memory, I feel so much gratitude to him for one particular point of instruction *, which has been of use to me through my whole life, that I cannot

* The Editor is sorry to say, that it is not in his power to point out the particular instruction, gained from the writings of Locke, to which Mrs. Carter here alludes. He has no recollection that he ever heard her mention it.

help,

help, though very imperfectly, discovering some zeal for his honor. Upon the whole, whatever mistakes he may have fallen into upon a subject rendered so extremely difficult by the perplexities in which he found it involved, the greatness of his understanding, the integrity of his character, and his exemplary piety, entitle him to so a high a degree of respect, that it appears a kind of sacrilege to treat him with ridicule.

I most heartily wish a prosperous voyage to our dear Sylph. It is no doubt necessary that she should go; and therefore, if one was very reasonable, one should not feel so uncomfortable about it. I believe, poor soul, she has been hurt by more things than mere *uncertainties*, and that there are some *certainties*, which have greatly affected her, and which she never suspected till last winter. She will have one weight removed from her mind, as the young man does not, it seems, accompany them to Ireland, of which she appeared to have a great dread.

Have you read the Memoirs or Letters of the Duc de Noailles? I have not, but hear an exceeding good character of them.

Alas! how can things look with a favorable aspect in America! It has from the beginning, I think, been very clear, that all but peace is useless. I am no American, but every reader of history

history must be convinced, that colonies are always, after a certain time, destructive to the mother country, whenever there is a contest; and that when they wish for independence, the truest policy is at once to give up the point. But these are not subjects for an aching head; I will therefore, my dear friend, wish you good night, and hope to-morrow's post will bring me a better account of Mr. Montagu.

LETTER CCIII.

Deal, *August* 25, 1777.

INDEED, my dear friend, you are quite in the right not to make a few days schooling an object, particularly as Mr. Montagu can lose but little in his learning, as he has Mr. Gilbank with him. Mrs. Denne will have their beds well aired, and every thing ready for their reception; she is a woman of most excellent character, and very trust worthy, and had she not had a most worthless husband, she need not have been under the necessity of letting lodgings.

Since

Since I wrote to you, I have seen a letter from Mr. Nixon, but little different from the verbal account I had heard. In eating the bread at different times, some pins were discovered, which alarmed Mrs. Nixon, and she examined the remainder of the bread which was untouched. There were two rolls, and a quartern loaf; in each of which were found pins of various sizes, some pretty large. It was some days after the children had eat the bread, before they were seized with internal pains and prickings. Mrs. Nixon gave them Daffy's Elixir, which brought away pins from them all: I have forgot the number from each, but the whole amounted to about sixty pins and one needle. The poor children had swallowed most part, and the rest was found in the untouched bread. As the pain had ceased, Mr. Nixon hoped they were all removed, but poor man, he could not be quite easy, which is no wonder. He has tried every means of discovering how this strange affair happened, but without success. He has had no quarrel with the baker, or any other person, to induce him to think it was any particular malice against himself and family. I have been told the baker's boy is run away; but as this is not mentioned by Mr. Nixon, I don't think it can be true. Mr. Nixon lives on Hayes Common.

American

American affairs seem to be in a very bad train, but that they always were, with regard to the nation. It grieves one's heart to think of the miserable suspense of so many poor individuals, who are informed that places are going to be stormed, and must wait till the next express for intelligence about the fate of their dearest friends. I thank God, I know but few engaged in this dreadful service, but enough to make me anxious for every account. Mrs. Howe writes me such an account of the taking of Ticonderago, that I suppose it must be true, though I find both from the papers and private opinions, that it is still doubted. I wish there could be any shadow of a doubt that Captain Finch was not killed. I am sure you will feel much for poor Lady Aylesford. God grant a speedy end to this fatal war, in which there must be so much private loss, and, to speak very moderately, no public advantage.

I have not heard any thing of our dear Sylph since she left Mrs. Dunbar's, at the which I am the more unquiet, from the account that both you and Mrs. Dunbar give of her health. God preserve her to us. Montagu desires his best duty to you, and says he is looking forward with great delight to the arrival of his friend Mr. Montagu, and he will do all in his power to make his *sejour* here as pleasant as possible. There are a good

many young people of their age, who amuse themselves very pleasantly and innocently, and I sincerely hope he may be restored to you in perfect health.

I hear that Voltaire was excessively mortified at not receiving a visit from the Emperor, when he passed by Ferney. In the malice of my heart, I am not contented with his feeling the vexation of not receiving a visit from the Emperor; but I wish him the more positive infliction of being obliged, by some means or other, to see you.

Is it not strange that neither you nor I, with all our curiosity about every historical spot, and with all our admiration of Tacitus, should never have thought of looking for the camp of Q. Varus, or at least the ground where it stood? We must certainly have been very near it, a circumstance which never struck me till I last read the description. The geographers say that Tentobergium is Doesburg, (as I believe it incontestably is) and Tacitus says that it was in the "Tentobergiensi Saltu," that the unburied remains of Varus's legions were found. One knows not how far this "Saltus" might extend, but I recollect a large open tract which we past about sun-set, between Doesburg and the village where we last stopt; possibly this might be the very place. A hundred years hence, when

we

we go thither again, we will endeavour to fix it with more certainty.

Do not these fine evenings tempt you into the open air after sun-set? I have just been sitting on the sea-shore, soothed by the murmurs of the ebbing tide, and the glimmerings of moon-light on the waves. The various ideas that arose in my mind in such a situation, led me into a doubt whether all this scenery of creation, beautiful and magnificent as it is, would have any effect on a capricious tyrant, or an unconnected hermit; and I at last concluded in the negative. The powers of imagination are annihilated by the violence of ungoverned passions, and must languish when they are not warmed and animated by the social affections of the heart. The pleasures of solitude have almost always a reference to society, and often mean no more than that we retire from the companions whom we do not like, to those whom we do. The views of nature aid us in this ideal commerce, as they then strike us only with universal objects, and general participation, and exclude all the particular and distinguishing circumstances, which separate us from those who so agreeably engage our thoughts. The sentiments of religion, with which every striking view of nature is always accompanied, inexpressibly heighten the pleasure which we

feel from any other subject of our thoughts, and correct the extravagances into which we are so apt to wander, without such an awe; and we feel the inexpressible delight which arises from a consciousness, that our heart is in its best disposition, both with regard to the Supreme Being, and our friends, and that we are in a state of all others, perhaps, the least liable to temptation to ill. For never did the world, I suppose, produce a single instance of any one that was instigated to an impious thought, or a wicked action, by the pleasure which the imagination feels from a moonlight scene, and a calm evening. I have some meaning or other in what I have written, but I much question whether the confusion of an aching head has suffered me to express it intelligibly, so I trust to your penetration to find it out.

We began to cut wheat in this neighbourhood last week. If this sullen day does not produce rain, it will be very beneficial to the reapers. Saturday was one of the hottest days I ever felt, and very delightful it was for those who had nothing to do, to prevent their sitting quietly on the sea-shore, as I did, and I hope soon to hear that you was sitting under the shade of your own trees, and not suffocated in London. I am, my dearest friend, &c.

LETTER CCIV.

Deal, *September* 20, 1777.

YOUR health I trust, my dear friend, has been improved by your little excursion in this most delightful weather, which adorns this sweet season with all its graces. I had this morning a most charming walk, partly on the sand, and partly on the top of the cliff, where the perpetual inequality of the ground gave me such different views of the sea and country, that almost every step discovered a new picture. I am delighted you are thinking of another ramble, because I am persuaded it is very good for you; but besides that general advantage for me, there is one ramble you might take which would be particularly good for me. And indeed I have some right to remind you of the hope you gave me when I last parted with you, that you would once more come to Deal. I am sure you do not regard the distance; and indeed, in your post chaise, and through such roads, it is no more than a longer airing. I have not so good, or so well furnished a room for you as I could wish, but you have slept in

in a less, and I think from the situation there cannot be the least danger of your being stifled for want of air. If I was a duchess or a countess, and could accommodate you as well in every respect as if you was at home, I should urge this point very strongly; but as this is not the case, I have not the assurance to say much about it, as the best entertainment I can have to propose to you is, what you will receive from the reflection on the pleasure and delight that the seeing you here will give me. Add to all this the pleasure of seeing Mr. Montagu's health so much improved by his visits to the sea nymphs and tritons. I have shewn him Lady Nuneham's verses, and we both agree in thinking them exceedingly pretty.

I am passing through the horrors of Nero's infernal reign. Pray do you not think that in the account which Tacitus gives of Burrhus and of Seneca, the historian contradicts the history? Their characters might be good when compared with Tigilinus, and some other of Nero's wretches; but surely their conduct is at best very equivocal in general; and with regard to the murder of Agrippina particularly, wicked and cowardly in the last degree. Agrippina indeed too well deserved her miserable fate, but she did not deserve it from Nero. If nothing further could

could be objected to them, the remaining at court, and, by the gravity of their character, giving a kind of sanction to the crimes of such a monster, seems strangely inconsistent with the profession of singular virtue. Had Nero discovered no worse symptom than the extravagances and vices of vain and impetuous youth, indulged by unbounded power, there might have been a reasonable expectation that wisdom and virtue, by patient perseverance, would at length gain the ascendant over his passions; but there could be no hope of reformation where all the natural feelings of humanity were lost, and the heart capable of such a crime as the murder of Britannicus.

I have heard from our dear Sylph, who speaks quite incidentally about her danger, which however was certainly of consequence enough to make one shudder. As to the house, it seems very little adapted to her genius. It is I believe a mere prosaical house, *full* of mortal comforts and conveniences, without the least particle of romance or sylphery in its whole composition. In short, a house much better adapted to the ordinary wants and purposes of the Right Honorable Agmondisham Vesey, Esq. and privy counsellor, than to those of his ætherial partner. Indeed by every description I ever heard or saw of the *old* castle,

castle, the exchange of its irregular and solemn gothic form, for the present display of Mr. Vesey's correct Grecian taste, must be very grievous to her poetical imagination, which at all times was sufficient to prevent any languor from the want of rational conversation; but mere rational conversation is not all she wants; and, unfortunately for her, a fine imagination in all its exercises, has a perpetual reference to the affections of the heart, and they reciprocally strengthen each other. With all these feelings the dear old castle, with the niches in its walls, and a thousand other gothic beauties was to her inestimable; but alas! Mr. Vesey understands her not. God mend her health, and give her better spirits, and return her to us next winter, not the worse for all her vexations, imaginary and real.

Are all the strange representations about Dr. Wilson's statue true? To be sure if he had chosen to raise a statue to Mrs. Macaulay, as high as that which Nebuchadnezzar placed on the plains of Dura, nobody has any thing to do with it; but to chuse his inscription from a book written by two nameless writers, and then to call those two writers Lord Lyttelton and Mrs. Peach, is such an instance of absurdity and impertinence as one shall not often meet with. Indeed it is so very absurd

absurd and so very impertinent, that one scarcely knows how to think it could exist, except in a paragraph in a newspaper.

I am sorry for Monsieur de Masseran's dangerous state of health, as every man of probity, is of consequence to the world. Madame de Crevecœur, if she is obliged to live in Spain, I should suppose would suffer rather by the loss of her family, than of France; for the manners of the Spanish court must, by this time, be entirely French.

I am suffocated by the thoughts of your being in London, visiting the *corps diplomatique* in such weather as this. Even in this airy situation, ventilated by the fresh sea breezes, it is difficult to keep oneself tolerably cool. The evenings are delightful, and the colouring of the sky beautiful to the highest degree; do, my dearest friend, come and see it, and your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCV.

Deal, *October* 15, 1777.

INDEED, my dear friend, you had no great reason to regret your absence from a very short hurrying visit. Mrs Scott did come the day I wrote, but was obliged to leave me so soon, that I could scarcely believe she had been in the house. Mrs. Cutts made me a more sociable visit, for she stayed with me while Mrs. Scott and Miss Arnold were engaged in other parts of the town. I was glad to find this good woman, at such an advanced age, had so much activity, that, in spite of a pretty boisterous wind, she walked to take a full view of the Downs, and flattered my local vanity, by admiring very much, it being so much more extensive than at Margate.

Your account of Lord Harcourt's calamitous accident quite sunk my spirits. I grieved to think how much more you must feel who had so lately been his guest, and left his family in such cheerful prosperity. These sudden and decisive transitions stun one's mind, and subdue it to a very affecting sense of the uncertainty of mortal things. I am heartily

heartily concerned for Lord and Lady Nuneham, who are both of a disposition to be deeply afflicted by such a misfortune.

Mr. Montagu takes his twelfth dip to-morrow, after which, he tells me, he is to set out for Horton *. I hope you will receive him in as lively health as he has enjoyed since he has been here, where I hope he has passed his time very pleasantly, at least so he says.

I was obliged to you for mentioning the party at Kew, and to render my intelligence complete, by a letter which I received last night from Mrs. Fielding, she mentions that you were perfectly well, though she feared the sad event of the next day would grievously affect your spirits. I rejoice you are going to Sandleford; fine days begin to be precious now; it is a great pity they should be past in London, where, as fine days, they cannot be enjoyed. A shower last night, if it does not end in rain, will very greatly add to the beauty of the country, which was beginning to lose its lustre by the excessive heat and dust. I hope you have been successful in your harvest at Sandleford. It has been most remarkably fine here.

I heard very lately from Mrs. Howe; she tells

* Mount Morris, in the parish of Horton, the seat of Matthew Robinson Morris, Esq. Mrs. Montagu's eldest brother, afterwards Lord Rokeby.

me

me there are no accounts from her brothers, but seems to believe the private letters which mention the landing in Maryland, but does not say a word of Virginia. It was not till a few days ago that I heard of the death of poor Miss Milles; the dean is so affectionate a father, and the family seem to live in so much harmony, that I am heartily sorry for the gap which this loss must have made in their domestic comfort.

I had a letter lately from our dear Sylph which absolutely cuts off all hope of her coming to England next winter. She seems pleased with the thoughts of spending it *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Hancock, at Lucan. Indeed, I believe, her imagination will be more agreeably amused in the furnishing her new dressing room, so as mortal dressing room was never yet furnished, than by the society of Dublin, where her heart would be perpetually recurring to her friends in England. She gives me a charming description of the situation of this room, and with the decorations of her genius, it will be enchanting.

I am delighted to find by your letter this moment received (for this has been begun these three days) that Lord and Lady Harcourt received no hurt from their overturn. You are certainly right that the best remedy against grief must be found in the recollection, and the exer-

tion

tion of virtue; yet I doubt whether these, unconnected with their future consequences, may be, in every case, efficacious.

My head has been very bad, owing to a dinner which I gave the day before Mr. Montagu left us, as I wished him to meet some friends who had been particularly attentive to him, and after dinner we adjourned to my brother's, where we had some most delightful music; Miss Beauvoir *, who sings delightfully, quite enchanted Mr. Montagu, who seems very fond of music; all this bustle and heat was too much for me, and I was confined to my pillow in consequence.

I did not read Lord Chesterfield's Letters. The part of them which I heard read, appeared to me so very French, that I had no curiosity. There is something in such kind of morality that appears to me perfectly detestable. It is founded

*A young lady, whose beauty, manners, and accomplishments, made her the delight of every society. She was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. Beauvoir, who afterwards married Miss Sharpe, an intimate friend of Mrs. Carter, only daughter and heiress of Fame William Sharpe, Esq. of South Lodge, Middlesex. Miss Beauvoir married William Hammond, Esq. head of the ancient and respectable family of St. Alban's Court, in East Kent. As this lady is still living, the Editor must not offend her delicacy, by speaking of her, as a wife and a mother, in those terms which his friendship and esteem would otherwise induce him to employ.

neither

neither on principles of virtue, nor natural sentiments of heart, but merely on selfish motives; and I never yet met with any person who appeared to me pleasant in society, whose behaviour appeared to be regulated by such a system of mere *savoir vivre* *. If good people fail in those attentions and delicacies which make the charm of general society and of private friendship, they are certainly so far deficient in goodness, for there is no rule so efficacious to promote them, as that which enjoins a suppression of those wrong tendencies, which are the great impediments to their exertions in virtue; but I have blundered upon a subject, which requires a clearer head, and more paper, than I at present possess. Adieu, my dear friend, I hope soon to hear that you are pleased with Mr. Montagu's improvement in health.

* Mrs. Hannah More seems to have been of the same opinion.

"Chill shade of that affected peer
Who dreaded mirth." "BAS BLEU."

LETTER CCVI.

Deal, *November* 23, 1777.

O DEAR, O dear, how pretty we look, and what brave things has Mr. Johnson said of us! Indeed, my dear friend, I am just as sensible to present fame as you can be. Your Virgils and your Horaces may talk what they will of posterity, but I think it is much better to be celebrated by the men, women, and children, among whom one is actually living and looking. One thing is very particularly agreeable to my vanity, to say nothing about my heart, that it seems to be a decided point, that you and I are always to figure in the literary world together, and that from the classical poet, the water drinking rhymes, to the highest dispenser of human fame, Mr. Johnson's pocket book, it is perfectly well understood, that we are to make our appearance in the same piece. I am mortified, however, that we do not in this last display of our persons and talents stand in the same corner. As I am told we do not, for to say truth, by the mere testimony of my own eyes, I cannot

I cannot very exactly tell which is you, and which is I, and which is any body else. But this must arise from the deficiency of my sight, for some of the good people of Deal, I am told, affirm my picture to be excessively like.

I grieve to think of the pain you have suffered, and most heartily congratulate you on the removal of the cause. There are few animal comforts I think higher than the seeing an aching tooth fairly out of one's head. I hope you have perfectly recovered the effects of this violent remedy. I shall be very glad to hear that you are fixed in London, as I think the country cannot at present be good either for your health or spirits. The wisest and best of the human race, must sometimes stand in need of occasions to withdraw them from their own thoughts, at least from their own feelings; and in town these occasions are every hour at hand.

I heartily congratulate you on the comfort and joy you must find in the discovery of so many virtues, and amiable dispositions in Mr. Montagu. I gladly communicated your account of his excellent behaviour to my brother, who is very much charmed with him; and indeed all his acquaintance here give full testimony to the amiable politeness of his behaviour; a politeness which evidently

evidently appears to arise from the dispositions of his heart, the only case in which it is uniform and consistent. As one of the first of human comforts arises from mutual family kindness, it would grieve me if you should not experience such returns, as your concern, and your exertions for the welfare and interest of every branch of yours, so justly entitles you to. Happily however the chief and noblest reward of right and benevolent dispositions and actions, depends on a surer foundation than the sensibility of those who are benefited by them.

We were petrified by a severe frost last Sunday, and now we are dissolving in a warm damp air. I have felt this change woefully, in an aching head. What strange contradictory accounts of American transactions! I have long since forborn giving credit to any but such as are transmitted by the Generals themselves. Most of the private accounts, I suppose are forgeries for stock-jobbers, who win or lose a battle just as it suits their own particular interests. I had lately a letter from Mrs. Howe; that family has heard nothing since the landing of the troops. How terrible must General Burgoyne's letter be to the friends of all his officers, by his mentioning the numbers that are missing, and not mentioning their names!

Mrs. Best left Deal last Monday; she has been here for the benefit of the sea, as she was smoked out of Dover Castle. She called on me the day before she went, she has quite lost her fever, and is much altered for the better. She was to spend a few days with Mrs. C. Scott, at Canterbury, and then go to town.

How good Mrs. Hancock may resist a hard winter, I know not; but our Sylph seems to be in no danger of petrifaction, for æther does not petrify. I had a letter from her lately, in which she seemed in good spirits, and I hope will pass the winter very tolerably, if one may guess from the manner in which I have heard her talk of one which she before spent with only Mrs. Hancock at Lucan. It is true that winter, of which she made the *éloge* was past; but, however, I cannot help thinking she will be more amused with raising fairy visions uninterrupted at Lucan, than in mixing with the gay society at Dublin while her head and heart are so full of the friends whom she has left in England. I shall most grievously feel her absence from my neighbourhood, but I believe it was right for her not to return so soon; and the chief object for one's friends as one's self, ought to be their virtue, the only circumstance that can give to friendship immortal hopes, and

distinguish

distinguish it from the temporary pleasures of a fading world *.

I congratulate you on the application of your roof; long, very long may you live happily beneath its shelter. I honor Mr. Stuart for making such ample amends for his former transgressions. Adieu, my dearest friend, all happiness attend you, and success in all your pursuits, for they all tend to good, and will no doubt bring a blessing with them.

LETTER CCVII.

Deal, *December* 20, 1777.

Indeed, my dear friend, had I no other motive to bring me to London than to avoid the hollow blasts of wind, I could sit through the wintry months listening to the tempests, and looking on the dashing ocean, with great tranquillity. But Dr. Johnson says, "London is the land for

* "All now are vanish'd! Virtue sole survives,
Immortal never-failing friend of man,
His guide to happiness on high."
THOMSON'S "Winter."

ideas," and I say it is the land of friendship. I propose to set out for Tunstal on the 27th; Mrs. Pennington will accompany me to Dartford in their carriage; and Miss Sharpe will be so good to convey me to town on Tuesday afternoon; so that my journey, thanks to good friends, promises to be as little fatiguing as an aching head can wish.

As to public affairs all seems dark and uncomfortable, as indeed it has ever done, ever since the beginning of this fatal war; and the last campaign by no means clears the prospect. It grieves one's heart to read the list of names, which conveys so much distress and sorrow to the families of those brave men who have fallen in this dreadful quarrel, equally productive of public and private ruin. What a dreadfully anxious state for our friend Mrs. Howe and all that family! But indeed one can feel nothing but grief from every new account conveyed from beyond the Atlantic. I see Sir Francis Clarke, to my great concern, among the killed, in General Burgoyne's fatal list. It is impossible I believe for a son and a brother to be dearer than he was to his mother and sisters. There are many unhappy mourners besides; but one's thoughts naturally dwell most on the misfortunes of those with whom one is acquainted. Though indeed every return must

must affect all who have any principles of humanity.

As to the debates, all that unprejudiced people have long been able to infer from them, I think must be, that the nation has as little to hope from opposition as from ministry. Pray did you read Mr. Wilkes's abuse of Samuel? The Bible to be sure is an obsolete kind of statute; but as one has not heard of any act of parliament by which it has been formally repealed; and as there are still people who retain some awkward prejudices in its favour, does it not seem strange, that a venerable prophet should have been mentioned in so insolent a manner, and no body thought it necessary to call the profligate speaker to order! At least there was no mention of any reproof, in the paper in which I read the account.

Lord Chatham has, no doubt, the happiness of a very *unembarrassed* countenance, or he could not have flourished away with so much rhetoric, on scalping knives, and tomahawks, after having employed such execrable instruments himself; execrable they are, by whatever authority they are put in practice.

It was strange inattention in the great orator to furnish such weapons against himself: yet considering his age, the high offices he has borne, and that something or other in his composition, to which

which the greatest part of the kingdom has been accustomed to look up to with admiration, was there not something extremely improper and indecent in what Lord Suffolk said to him? Indeed it seems not to have been justifiable to whatever speaker it had been addrest.

I could not help laughing at the account you give of your careless indifference to ———, and the manner in which you passed over her strange neglect of you; yet perhaps the most that can be expected from people so newly, and so very much engaged in the hurry and bustle of the *world*, is, that they should recollect their *friends*, particularly those to whom they owe so much, and resume the connexion that did them so much honor, whenever they meet, though they have not engaged much of their thoughts in the hours of absence, and amidst the amusements of immediate objects. I firmly believe the warmth of gratitude she expressed last year was very sincere, and that she felt all she said, for there is such a foundation of understanding in her character, and such a mixture of good, as must render her sensible to all the advantages of conversing with you, and give her a title to any such instances of your regard as may safely be bestowed, without your again making it an *affaire du cœur*. You must not, I have often, my dearest friend, told you, expect

pect to find people exactly such as you wish them, or as they ought to be. Extreme youth is an apology for many little instances of neglect; beauty much admired and caressed by the world often chokes better feelings; but the mind will have its hours of repose in spite of fashion, and then all the better seeds, which were early sown, will spring up and bear fruit; again all good propensities will flourish; again the sense of obligations and kindnesses, seemingly forgotten in the days of vanity, will return with renewed warmth to the heart that early beat with delight at receiving them. Such I am sure will be the feelings which —— must experience by and by towards you her earliest friend.

I never saw more than extracts of Mr. Browne's Essay in the magazines, and that was years ago, but I recollect being extremely pleased with what I did read. The objection, however, which you say he makes to Dr. Clarke's *fitness of things**, appeared to me trifling, and equally

* The great objection to Dr. Clarke's *fitness of things*, the eternal rule of right and wrong, and other jargon of the same kind, is that they suppose certain principles independent of the will of God, and by which therefore he must, as a benevolent and just Being, be governed. Whereas the will of God, as he has been pleased to reveal it, is the sole rule of right and wrong, and fitness. This is asserted in the Bible

applicable to his own scheme, where the question may with equal propriety be asked. With regard to *ridicule* I know not what to say; utterly to condemn the use of it seems to be removing a wholesome check to the growth of human extravagance and folly. And yet when one considers how greatly the cause of truth and virtue is often injured by it, one cannot think on it without great terror. I am not quite clear that the parallel between the abuses of *reason* and *ridicule* is strictly just; there does not seem to be any such opposition between *true* and *false ridicule* as between *true* and *false reasoning*; for ridicule, however improperly and unjustly applied, is always true *ridicule*, but considered in the way of argument, is perhaps always *sophistry*, of some kind or other, and therefore perhaps a reason not lawfully employed even in the defence of truth. In what part of Dr. Clarke's works has he mentioned *the Tale of a Tub?* I cannot help greatly inclining to his opinion, as you state it, about it.

I hope to read Miss More's Tragedy when I come to town; but I do not see that it is yet printed. You tell me the judgment of the world

Bible throughout. It is obvious that the philosophers of one age and country have always differed from those of another in their notions of right and wrong. *To the law, therefore, and to the testimony.*

about

about it, but you do not tell me, what, if it is equally favorable, would do the author greater honor, your own. If this should be the case, as for her sake I heartily wish it may, poor Mrs. C——'s complexion will deepen to a full orange. Adieu, my dear friend. I am happy in the hope, that it will not be long before I shall be in a better situation, than the subscribing myself at such a distance,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCVIII.

Deal, *January 6*, 1773.

Many thanks to you, my dear friend, for your letter. I hoped by this time to have been able to give you an account when I could be likely to remove to town; but another melancholy event in the family has greatly added to my distress, and renders all my schemes uncertain. My poor sister Pennington has lost her eldest son, and I cannot think of leaving this place till I know when the Doctor and she propose to come, or whether they come at all. They are at present

sent with some friends in their own neighbourhood; but I hope they will come here soon, as change of scene will be more likely to recover their spirits than returning to their own home, where they will so perpetually miss the object of their great solicitude and care, for many months back in particular, and I may say almost from the hour of his birth. They have, I thank God, the consolation of reflecting that my poor nephew's character was unblemished by even the shadow of a vice, and never did any young man leave the University with a more irreproachable reputation. It has pleased the Supreme and all wise and good Disposer of all things, to deprive his parents of the immediate reward of the virtuous education they gave him; but I trust they will rejoice in it in a more secure and a happier world.

My health is, considering the sufferings of my heart, better than could be expected. Poor Montagu is with me, and is most sadly distressed by the loss of his aunt *, who was very fond of him, and more so for his brother; we are both much the better for the kind attentions of Miss Sharpe, who, on hearing of our first misfortune,

* An amiable and excellent woman, wife of Mrs. Carter's eldest brother. One letter at least is missing here, in which this event must have been mentioned.

came

came immediately to Deal, and will be so kind as to stay to convey me to town. These are very dark days, my dear friend; but I trust in God, the sunshine of cheerfulness will, in due time, be restored to my heart. My poor brother is with Dr. Douglas, and we have the comfort of hearing a good account of his health.

This letter has been began these three days; but, alas! an aching head would not let me finish it. Last night I received a letter from poor Mrs. Pennington; they have determined on going to their own house, and my sister wishes not to see me till her spirits are more recovered. I believe she judges well for us both; but had she been of a different opinion, so well do I love her, that however painful it might have been to my feelings, I should have acted just as she wished.

Mrs. Underdown is much better than I could have expected, and very impatient for me to leave this place; so I hope to be in town on Saturday, and will do myself the honor of dining with you on Sunday, as I must devote Saturday evening to seeing my poor brother, who does not, I find, recover his spirits at all. Change of air, and of scene, will, I hope, tend to raise mine, which are at present dreadfully low. I trust I am perfectly resigned to the Divine will; but the heart must feel both its own distresses, and the distresses

tresses of those it loves. I ought to be thankful to the highest degree for the innumerable blessings and comforts, which, amidst the varieties of this changing world, I have, through my whole life, been permitted to enjoy.

Adieu, my dear friend, I most sincerely join in your petition, that if it pleases God, the present year may be happier to us both than the last, and am,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER CCIX.

Clarges Street, *April* 28, 1778.

You must still be contented, my dear friend, with the enjoyment of a mere poetical spring, if your weather continues as cold and as dreary as ours. I rejoice to find your health is not affected by it; but I am not quite easy as to the consequences of your immoderate application to reading, especially in a book which, by what I have heard of its dullness, must sit upon your stomach like hard dumplings. All I have read of it is the ceremonial of receiving Catherine of Arragon, so I do not criticise from any judgment of

of my own. I heartily wish, and the world has reason to wish it too, that, to diversify your studies you would realize your scheme of contrasting our Elizabeth with Catherine of Medicis; or rather of giving a general and particular history of our heroine, instead of merely opposing her to a woman of straw. Elizabeth seems to have had a fixed system, Catherine's silly plots and *tracasseries* were only *de jour la journée.* Accordingly they ended in nothing; the character she left behind her was scarcely distinguishable from that of any other wicked intriguing woman, and she was presently forgot. Do pray rescue our Elizabeth from the nonsense which later historians have talked about her. They seem to think they have quite annihilated the superiority of her talents, by saying she was assisted by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances. And what does a fortunate concurrence of circumstances ever signify, in any case, without such a degree of wisdom, as is sufficient to apply them right? But she was exceedingly vain. It is very true that her Majesty snuffed up the incense of flattery in great abundance; but her head was too strong to grow giddy by the perfume *.

* Mrs. Carter's view of Elizabeth's character, though favourable, seems to be well founded. It is a striking circumstance with respect to that Queen, that those who have written

The accounts of Lord Chatham are very bad; it is said he has had another fit; but whether this particular be true or not, it is, I believe, very true, that there are no hopes of his recovery. Our enemies will rejoice at his departure, a sure testimony to his public importance. His character has certainly been a very extraordinary phenomenon in the moral and political world.

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful *!"

You have read in the papers an account of the attempt made to disable the Trident, mentioned under the article of a report. This report is certainly true. The main stay was cut with a hatchet and a pen-knife, and so artfully concealed by pitch, &c. that it was amazing how it came to be discovered, which was by Captain Elliot himself. This ship would have held out for a little while, but must have been crippled in the very first gale. The mainmast would have given way, and probably several people would have been

Britch against her, have rather urged her faults and frailties as a set off against her merits, than accused her of positive offences as a Sovereign, or convicted her of bad government. It would not be easy to draw a comparison between characters so dissimilar as those of Elizabeth and Catherine.

* Young, Night I.

killed.

killed. The author of this wicked manœuvre is not yet discovered; and every body seems at a loss to account for it. One comfortable truth seems deducible from it, that it is not precisely the same thing, whether the Commissioners go or stay. According to their different parties some lay this mischief to the American, French, Scotch, and Bedford treachery. It is unpleasant for those who are to go the voyage, in the same ship with a wretch or wretches capable of such an action. For the greater security the watch is doubled. Captain Elliot has offered an hundred pounds reward for the discovery, but none is made. All that can be known at present is, that the mischief was done between Sunday and Monday. You may depend on the truth of all this, for besides having the particulars from others, I had it from Miss Elliot herself.

Lord A—— has recommended the drinking only Port to the Militia officers. The Duke of Dorset said, it did not agree with him. The Duke of Devonshire, much to his honor, thanked Lord A——, and promised to comply with that, and every other regulation which should be judged proper. If most of the officers of distinction follow this example, much ruinous expence will be saved to the subalterns. I have scarcely left room to say how much I am

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCX.

Clarges Street, *May* 10, 1778.

MANY thanks to you, my very dear friend, for your kind invitation; but it is not in my power to do myself the pleasure of waiting on you, as all my schemes and appointments are made for going to Deal next week, where I have much business to arrange in my little *menage*, in parting with two servants who have lived with me for many years, and in whom I had that perfect confidence, which I cannot of course place in strangers till I know their characters. I shall, therefore, for some time be my own housekeeper, and take the administration of my own little affairs into my own hands, *bongré, malgré; ergo*, I cannot for these weighty reasons have the happiness of coming to you at Sandleford.

Lord Chatham's illness has proved a putrid fever; he is rather better, and the faintings have ceased. Perhaps so decisive and critical a distemper may occasion such a revolution in his Lord-ship's constitution as may restore him to health. His active and fiery spirit might help perhaps

perhaps to awaken the slumbering powers of government. But the Most High who "ruleth in the kingdoms of men" can never want means to save us, if his Providence judges it fit, that we shall be saved. Miserably weak at present appear all resources of our own. You have doubtless read of the promises made to the Irish by our ministry with respect to their trade, to which, besides its general reasonableness, they seem particularly entitled, by their noble and generous behaviour in our present difficulties. The sordid and selfish temper of some of our trading towns is alarmed at this scheme; our ministers are frightened at their threats, and it is thought all the favorable intentions towards the Irish will be sacrificed to their fears, and thus they will be more exasperated at our iniquity than ever. Mr. Burke has acted with great spirit and steadiness, at the hazard of losing his interest at Bristol. His letters on this subject, I hear, are to be collected and printed. Pray do not you think these are fine times for us dowagers and spinsters, if we have a mind to get seats in the House of Commons? It is only signifying to the ministers, that if our demand is refused we will *rebel*, and all that our hearts can wish will be granted immediately.

Poor Lord Polwarth, I hear, is in so dan-

gerous a state, that it is supposed he will hardly live to come to England; I am sure you will be sorry to hear it.

This letter ought to have gone eight days ago, but one of my attacks of languor made me unfit for any thing but to loll on a *settée*, and from thence to bed at seven o'clock; it was occasioned probably by the excessive damp and rain which we have lately had. This change is so much for the general good, that an unimportant individual ought not to complain of a private inconvenience. And, indeed, such an attack *de tems en tems* is not without its share of personal advantage, as it furnishes an excellent lesson of patience and thankfulness under the more moderate sufferings of habitually imperfect health.

I hope your laborious political reading has been interrupted by the intervals of fine weather, which must have tempted you probably into your post-chaise. Even within view of London, I have felt a spirit and freshness in the air, which has been inexpressibly reviving to me.

In your last letter you judged too truly of poor Lord Chatham, he was thought much better; but his faintings are returned, and very small hopes of his recovery left. There is one strange symptom in his case. An abscess forms in his throat which breaks, and the discharge is

as black as ink. This relieves him for the present; but the abscess forms again, and again discharges in the same manner. I had this account from Lord Shelburne, with whom I dined yesterday at Sir William Wake's, and a very pleasant dinner it was. Lord Shelburne, Colonel Barré, Lord and Lady Dartrey, Mr. and Mrs. Earle were all the company, so the conversation was general.

Have you heard of an answer to Mr. Gibbon, which must make him half mad, for it seems it has proved him to be extremely ignorant of history, &c.? There is one circumstance that must likewise prove him either very careless, or very unfair. It seems that Mr. Gibbon has made a quotation or quotations from some author, which his answerers affirm are not only not to be found in the passages which he names, but in no passage of the said author whatever. There is another answer to Mr. Gibbon by Dr. Apthorpe, which is said to be excellent.

Have you seen Parson Horne's letter to Mr. Dunning? It is an introduction to a larger work, in which he is to confute Mr. Harris in his Hermes, &c. I have seen none of these pieces, but had this account of them yesterday, when I received much more literary information among politicians than I did a few days ago from a com-

pany of scholars and authors. As if the two sexes had been in a state of war, the gentlemen ranged themselves on one side of the room, where they talked their own talk, and left us poor ladies to twirl our shuttles, and amuse each other, by conversing as we could. By what little I could overhear, our opposites were discoursing on the old English poets, and this subject did not seem so much beyond a female capacity, but that we might have been indulged with a share in it.

We are still asleep in the political world. Our government knew nothing about the Toulon fleet from the thirteenth on which it sailed, till the twenty-seventh. It is now at Cadiz, and is thought to be destined for the Channel. The Scotch violently opposed the Irish bill, and wanted it put off for three months, but they were defeated in that point. How it will succeed at last nobody seems to guess.

Mrs. Chapone has been ill, and obliged to have a tooth drawn; I am going to meet her this afternoon at Mrs. Blasset's. The weather here is very cool and pleasant, and I keep out of every place that might make it otherwise; yet I am good for nothing with my tiresome head. I shall be glad when I am got home, though I feel a heavy weight at my heart; but this is no more than

than I have felt ever since I left it. In time I hope my spirits will get better. Many thanks for your kind enquiries about my poor brother; he is, thank God, well in health, but his spirits are like mine, broke to pieces; his friends have advised him to travel, and next week he is going to Holland and Denmark. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXI.

Deal, *May* 29, 1778.

My dear Friend,

I HAVE to thank you for your very kind letter, and can assure you I do take care of myself, and do exert all my energies to keep up my spirits; but I do feel my losses, and much fear I shall: I console myself that my loss is their gain, but still my heart will feel heavy, time and a firm trust in God will reconcile me I have no doubt to what he has thought fit I should bear, but do not be uneasy about me I beg.

Yes, indeed, my dear friend, I agree with you that nonsense has lately prevailed to a more than

than usual degree in the cities of London and Westminster. It is the more provoking, as it is nonsense so timed, that I cannot laugh at it. To consider the present situation of this kingdom, and to read what is, day after day, the subject of debate in both Houses, does not so much excite the spirit of ridicule, as of astonishment, indignation and dismay. I do not speak this from disrespect to the memory of Lord Chatham, I think he was in most parts of his public character a very great man, and deserved much of his country. His contempt of all election-jobbing, his uncorruptness, his unwearied diligence and application to the duties of his office, and the care he took that all employed under him should execute their part, are excellences in which he never, I believe, had a superior, and very seldom an equal; and happy would it have been for this nation, had they been imitated by succeeding ministers to the war, he did not make, but found it ready made, and most wretchedly administered till he undertook it. And perhaps if he had been allowed to make the peace, he would have concluded it in such a manner as might have in a much better degree secured us from future insults, than that which was patched up by the faction which expelled him; and it always appeared to me a most fatal measure, that he was

at

at that time removed. You will not, I believe, suspect me of any fondness for conquest, and what is called glory, nor of wishing any unreasonable advantage from success. But surely it is right for a nation to make such an improvement of victory, as in framing a peace to provide every possible security against a future war. I remember asking Lord Bute if his peace was formed on such a plan. I was answered, yes —— and a war broke out again, I think in less than five years.

I fear I am less charitable than you with regard to Lord Ch——'s dissipation of his whole fortune, which seems to me utterly incompatible with private or public virtue. Whether it was inheritance or a gift, his children had an equal claim to a provision, and the world to a good example. I am grieved for what I should suppose his family must feel from all these idle altercations, which prevent his being quietly interred, and must help to continue the quickest sense of their grief. Ambition and vanity may be gratified by such a bustle; but affection must be stabbed to the heart.

I have read in the papers as if it was suspected that the French had some design upon the coal works in the North, but as you do not mention any thing of it, I hope it is not true. There has been

been sad work in this neighbourhood lately with the smugglers. They have shot one poor Custom House officer dead, and dangerously wounded two others. Adieu, my dearest friend; I hope the French will not come near you, at any rate I shall be glad when you are nearer to me.

LETTER CCXII.

Deal, *June* 21, 1778.

Indeed, my dear friend, I think your dowlas shifts and checquered aprons a more enviable contrivance, than the finest birth-day trimming that ingenious vanity ever devised. The one will tarnish and fade without hope of reparation; the other will furnish materials for a "sky-spun robe," which may figure in a more splendid assembly than was ever formed in any imperial drawing-room below the stars.

I perfectly agree with you, my dear friend, that the world is run mad; and am often shocked at that instance of it which you mention, the amazing extravagance of dress in the middling and

lower classes of people. With regard particularly to the farmers' wives and daughters, perhaps, much is to be charged to the account of the landlords. The wretched indolence and dissipated lives of the gentlemen, which, to save trouble, have led them into consolidating their farms, has been a means of raising the tenants to a very improper degree of opulence, and this has produced luxury. Those who have not the same advantages will, however, foolishly think they have a right to make the same appearance, because they happen to be of the same denomination, and conclude that one farmer's daughter is as good as another, and so forth.

I had heard of the wretched situation of Lady ——, and I am told she had four thousand a year. Among the acquaintance of the person from whom I had my intelligence, it is affirmed, that Lady —— owes above fifty thousand pounds in play-debts. It is well if no honest tradespeople are hurt, but, alas, that is hardly to be expected; for their lawful debts are the last that people of her stamp think of paying, and I cannot help fearing that the mischief extends very far: in my opinion nothing is too bad for her; a male gamester is a most disgraceful and shocking character; but a female gamester seems to be a blot in nature. She must forego all that is good and great

great belonging to her sex, before she can boldly shake the dice, or offer bets. I know nothing in the world of vice, that more shocks my feelings than to hear of such characters, for their habits of life must inevitably lead them to all kind of wickedness, and it is to be feared often to appear before their great Creator and Judge uncalled *. This lady promised better things in her youth, but early left to her own guidance, without fixed principles, she has fallen most dreadfully; but neither you nor I shall break our hearts for any losses of her fellow-gamesters. Their success has been better than her's, but their occupation is equally contemptible and unjustifiable. I suppose you have heard that Lord —— has ruined his fortune, and that other explosions of the same kind are expected. Pray could you ever discover who gets the money that is lost? I never remember to have heard of above two or three people who made a fortune by gaming. The servants indeed share the card money; does Satan sweep the stakes, and carry off all the winnings? At

* Mrs. Carter's conjecture was shewn to be well founded afterwards, by Mr. Moore's copious and elaborate "Enquiry "into the Subject of Suicide," published in 1790. In this work it is proved that no cause has produced suicide so frequently as gaming; probably in the proportion of nine cases out of ten.

least

least one never heard they were any where extant on earth.

I hope there will be no invasion any where, but during this suspense and alarm it will be a relief to my mind, if you do take your Northern journey, that Shields is so far from Denton. Though, if the French should land, it may not be any great national object, God forbid it should happen. Such an event would cause much distress to many individuals, and utter ruin to others.

You see by the papers, that Lord North has the Cinque Ports; but you do not see there, that the Duke of Dorset applied for the place to Lord North, who promised to lay his request before the King. The King would give no promise to any body, during the life of Lord Holdernesse, and, at his death, gave it (unasked, it is said,) to Lord North, at which the Duke is very much displeased.

I hope no rude violence will tear your venerable ruins of Jarrow from their foundation. Such remains should be considered as the consecrated victims of time, and as the chronicles that mark his slow and silent progress through the successions of long ages. I am not sure whether I should not raise some fence to secure this awful memento of the instability of human things, in a deep

deep repose, uninterrupted by the gay song of the milk maid, and the sports of babbling children; though probably your turn of thought upon the occasion was more reasonable than my reveries.

My brother is, I hope, by this time at Spa, where his next destination is I know not; for he has no fixed plan, any where for a change of scene. The Dr. and Mrs. Pennington left Deal on Saturday, but I hope will return again, they are gone to Mill Hill with Miss Sharpe, and mean to make some little excursions together, which I hope will be of use to them all, but particularly to my sister, who though, I bless God, she is perfectly resigned to her loss, cannot recover her spirits. *En attendant*, I hope no invasion will molest my walks on the sea-shore.

Mr. Glover has confirmed the account which I believe I mentioned to you of the state of the fleet. But one's heart sickens at the general state of the nation, from our folly and wickedness; God is much more gracious to us than we deserve, and it is to be hoped his mercies will awaken us to repentance. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXIII.

Deal, *July* 27, 1778.

INDEED, my dear friend, I did think it very long since I had heard from you; but as I concluded you had all that variety of bustle and business, which must be done just as you was leaving town, I would not add to it by telling you so. And to reward me for my forbearance, I have now to thank you for your kind and entertaining account of your journey, and for giving me the pleasure of knowing you are not the worse for it, though you seem to have run some hazard by your expedition, as sixty-three miles in a very hot day was rather a violent measure. The weather is quite glorious, the fields about us already "laugh and sing." The sun shines bright and warm by day, and the moon sheds a soft light and cool freshness over the evening, and the summer appears in all its charms. All this I hope you will enjoy in good health and good spirits too.

It is no wonder you found your visit to Mr. Smelt so alluring. Every one who has heard his character, must be pleased to find the retirement

of

of such a man, embellished by so charming a scene, as you describe the situation of his house. He must, one should suppose, feel himself very happy in his escape from a world, where he could meet with so little congenial to his own mind. In the commerce of active and public life, many a deflexion from strict rectitude, that might make little impression on the feelings of ordinary virtue, would shock the quick sensibility of principles delicate and exalted like his.

I love the honest zeal of your boisterous pitmen. I could not help thinking if they had executed their design of drawing your chaise, how much happier you must have felt than Sesostris, when his chariot was dragged by harnessed kings. His conveyance was the insolent triumph of prosperous oppression. Yours would have been the willing tribute of cordial gratitude and affection; a tribute that can never be exacted by the conquerors of this world, whose only object seems to be, to "cause terror in the land of the "living."

It is so unnatural an operation to me to burn one of your letters, that it was with a very awkward feeling that I set about it. However I obeyed your injunctions. I am sorry for the very unpleasant task in which you have been engaged. One would not have imagined that a person,

person, who had so emancipated himself from all the external habits and appearances of the world, should have retained so much of its prejudices and passions, but they, alas! I fear, are the last things we are inclined to part with.

I was afraid the capture of the French ships would have hurried on a war. I rejoice to find *you* still think it doubtful whether we may not have peace. God grant a conclusion to all these horrid quarrels. Happy would it be, if it ever entered into the heads of the potentates of the earth, on whom the lives of so many thousand depend, that "*homo res sacra!*" Orders are given to our commanders to burn, sink, and so forth, all French ships that come in their way. If this is not war, it seems mighty like it. Perhaps these orders are in consequence of a French proclamation which I mentioned to you, I believe, in a letter I sent last week. A Spanish ship came into the Downs two days ago, and gave information that a French frigate had chased her within three miles of the South Foreland. This is a strange story, but that such an information was given by the Spanish vessel is quite true. It is an odd transition, but do not you think that if Dr. Young had lived in the decline of the Roman Empire, he would have been Seneca, and that if Seneca had lived in the eighteenth

teenth century, he would have been Dr. Young*. There seems to me a wonderful resemblance in the turn of their genius. Both are sometimes more sublime than almost any other writers, and both comprize an infinite deal of sense in two or three words. At others they are trifling and diffuse to the most tiresome and contemptible degree. Poor Seneca, indeed, is entitled to excuse and compassion from the general depravity of the public taste. Rome was sunk into slavery, and the natural consequence of slavery, is affectation and false wit. But our friend Dr. Young had no claim to any such indulgence. He lived in an age of liberty and unadulterated genius. Perhaps his faults were contracted by an early uncorrected study of the Roman authors. I want to know whether you are struck by this resemblance. If not do turn the thought about in your mind, if it can push and squeeze its way through visits, dinners, assemblies, notes, letters, bricks, mortar, and wainscot, and Mr. Stuart †.

* Probably there are few persons who may be conversant with the writings of these two authors, who will not be immediately struck with the comparison, though it may not have occurred to them before. In addition to the circumstances pointed out in the letter, there seems to be the same fondness for point and antithesis, in the works both of the Roman and of the English moralist.

† Better known by the appellation of *Athenian Stuart*.

I am

I am much obliged to you for your enquiries after my brother. All the accounts we have received from him mention his being in perfect health. He has gone over the Seven United Provinces, and declares he would not take the property of them all, on the condition of being obliged to live in any one of them. When he last wrote, he was setting out for Pyrmont and Hanover; and afterwards he proposes to visit Lubeck, Hamburgh, and Copenhagen, and perhaps some part of Sweden. I hope he will return in autumn, for I miss him sadly, and I well know that, though his curiosity is amused, his heart is always in his own country.

My nephew has the pleasure of being well acquainted with Mr. W. Gregory *. It is a fine short passage for your young people to visit their own country. Is it not a pity that M—— was not made solicitor and attorney when T—— had the seals. What a "*par nobile*" it would have made!

Did you know any thing of Colonel Cosnan? He is just dead. Poor man, he laboured for some years under an inexplicable disorder, which no medicines could reach; and for the last two

* Then of Beliol College, Oxford, and younger son, as mentioned before, of Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh.

or three months it ended in absolute insanity. He was much esteemed and beloved, and is a loss to the society of this country. His not remaining long in his last deplorable state is a great blessing to my poor friend, whose spirits were sunk by it to the lowest degree. I hope she will now grow better. Have you ever read Mr. Eden's book on Penal Laws? I think it would please you. I just now saw a gentleman who is secretary to our Admiral, and I find by him that there is not likely to be any formal declaration of war, till it is known what is the success of our commissioners in America. Adieu, my dearest friend, take care of yourself in the midst of all this bustle.

LETTER CCXIV.

Deal, *August* 7, 1778.

I SHOULD before this, my dear friend, have answered your kind letter, had I not been absolutely disqualified by a bad fit of the headach. I find a much greater obstacle to writing from want of health, than from want of leisure. Age, which cures most people of their head-achs, gives

gives no relief to mine, and there are but few days in every week, in which I am good for any thing but to loll in an easy chair, and from thence proceed to my pillow. But enough and too much of this silly subject.

Mrs. Underdown desires her best thanks for your kind mention of her. There was no need of laying your good wishes on her pillow, for she was only one whole day confined to her own room. When I consider her age, the weight with which she fell, that, besides her two fractured bones in her arm, she was universally bruised, and her head much hurt, I am quite astonished, and thankful that she is so well. She owes it in a great measure to absolute quiet; her front door was locked up, and she was not suffered to see any body but myself, and then only for five minutes at a time.

Since I wrote last Mrs. Underdown has had two letters from my brother, the last was from Zell. You will be pleased to hear that the residence of our Princess is in a very delightful situation. My brother, in speaking of the general miserable effects of despotic government in Germany, says, that the Hanoverians seem to be in the most comfortable situation of any subjects whom he has seen under absolute princes. Does not your English vanity, like my English vanity, in-

cline you to think, it is because the Electors of Hanover have been so long Kings of Great Britain, and that the liberal principles of our government and laws, have in some degree operated on the Hanoverian councils? If you ever think of visiting Germany, do pray take your own equipage. My brother could neither hire nor purchase any thing but a waggon, in which, by jolting from three in the morning till nine at night, he has been able to proceed about fifty miles a-day. He has been so much used to travelling in all manner of countries, and all kind of ways, that this awkward exercise does not seem to hurt him, for he always gives us the comfort of mentioning his being, I thank God, in perfect health. As the Hanoverians appear the happiest people he has seen in Germany, he says, that the subjects of the King of Prussia appear to be the most wretched. This is, no doubt, highly to the honor of the philosophy that piques itself on fulfilling "*tous les devoirs* "*de l'humanité,*" and so forth.

I believe I mentioned to you just after I come home, that our smugglers had killed one officer and wounded two more. On Thursday night last, they shot two others. The poor men are not yet dead, but most sadly wounded. Besides the evident robbery people commit, who encou-

rage

rage this infamous trade, how shocking must it be to reflect, if they ever do reflect, that they contribute to so many murders. I congratulate you in being surrounded by people who get an honest living under your auspices, by which means it is comfortable as well as honest.

I am never much dejected by *patriotic* wailings. Some time ago I had a letter, in which my correspondent told me, she had met a patriot in her visits, who just before he left the room let off, by way of news, that the French had taken the Jamaica fleet. On the very day I received this letter, the said Jamaica fleet, in great safety and quietness, sailed through the Downs.

We have just began harvest in this country, and with the finest prospect imaginable. The rain is gone, and there is only just such wind as might be wished to cool and fan the reapers at their labour. The Dr. and Mrs. Pennington are returned to Tunstal for their harvest; they have been with Miss Sharpe to Luton and Woburn. I am glad of any thing that can employ their time and thoughts. People who place their chief happiness upon earth in domestic comforts, feel deeply and long the wounds of the heart.

I had an account from London which calls the late skirmish between the two fleets, on our side, a victory. But the express sent to our Admiral, is

is not very encouraging. We have three or four hundred men killed and wounded, and we have taken nothing from the enemy *. Adieu, my dear friend. Good weather, and plentiful crops attend your harvest.

LETTER CCXV.

Deal, *September* 19, 1778.

Your last letter gave me the pleasing hope, that before this you would have left dusty, hot London, and have the delight and pleasure of enjoying this finest of all fine autumnal weather in the country. The serenity of the air, the beauty of the landscapes, and the unclouded colouring of the morning and evening sky, are quite enchanting here; and I hope you have the same charming scenery at Sandleford.

I congratulate you on the prosperous appearance of your palace, which by your account I should imagine would, in another year, be ready

* This was Admiral, afterwards Lord Keppel's engagement with the French fleet, on the 27th of July, 1778.

to

to receive you. God grant you health and spirits long to enjoy it yourself; and when, from the condition of mortal things, it must at last be necessary for you to exchange it, I trust for a better, may you leave it with the pleasing prospect of its descending to a successor worthy of your choice, and of all the advantages attending it.

It rejoiced me extremely to receive so good an account of your health. What you say of poor Mr. —— is sad indeed; but his is an incurable distemper. Old age is, indeed, a sad season under such circumstances; but God be thanked they are not inevitable, and you and I will hope for the best, if we should hold out to such a period. The effect of the union between body and spirit *, must ever be unaccountable to

* It is not quite clear whether Mrs. Carter here means the *soul*, by the word *spirit*, or merely the understanding, or mind. In speaking of Bishop Sherlock below, she uses the word *soul*. But very eminent metaphysicians have believed, that man is really composed of three parts, body, soul, and spirit. This notion is countenanced by St. Paul in his 2d Epistle to the Thessalonians, v. 23. Upon which, see Hammond's and Whitby's notes. Homer, also, in speaking of Hercules, in Ulysses's descent into Hell, mentions him as divided into three parts:

Εἰδῶλόν γε αὐτὸς ἣ μὲν ἀθανάτοις θεοῖσι. ODYSS. XI. 601.

So

to all human researches. Perhaps they are different in every individual. Dean Swift lost all the powers of his understanding, while he retained the most robust habit of bodily strength. Bishop Sherlock preserved the whole vigour of his soul, when the instruments of exerting it were entirely worn out. In some the powers of body and mind sink gradually together in a gentle decay; and in others, the unimpaired spirit feels no abatement of its highest faculties, and enjoys a cooler temperament of the passions, which makes it sufficient amends for a diminution of animal activity and strength. My father at eighty-seven could have composed a Sermon with the same perspicuity and force of argument as at forty; and could have writ it with an unshaking and legible hand *.

I wish Mr. T. Pitt may find benefit, from his abode in Italy, to his health. I was the other morning at Kingsgate, where you must have

So that his image, or spirit, ειδωλον, was in hell; αυτος, he himself, his soul, in heaven, and his body buried in the earth. There is a very curious and interesting disquisition on these three parts of man, in Webster's "Displaying of "supposed Witchcraft," London, 1677, fol.

* Mrs. Carter herself died in her 89th year, with faculties scarcely at all diminished. She addressed a little poem to Lady Cremorne, when in her 77th year, which is the last in her works, and is thought to be singularly beautiful.

heard,

heard, if you have not seen, that Lord Holland had built a house, and scattered around it many fanciful representations of antique and ruined buildings, and probably flattered himself that a place on which he had bestowed so much contrivance and expence, and of which he was so fond, would descend to his posterity *. But the estate is now in possession, not of his sons, but of his steward. What a striking lesson does poor Lord Holland's whole history hold out to all mankind!

Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere Divos!

The inhabitants of the cottages on these grounds, greatly lament their change of landlord. Let this be mentioned amongst the few things that do honor to his memory. There are other instances amidst all his faults, in which Lord Holland shewed dispositions of kindness. But from these he derived no advantage, for the people he obliged were as unprincipled as himself; and there can be no friendship or gratitude without virtue. I was sorry to hear so bad an account of Mr. Drummond's health. I had once about an hour's *tête-*

* "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall con-
"tinue for ever, and their dwelling places to all g nera-
"tions." "Nevertheless man being in honour abideth
"not," *Psalm* xlix.

à-tête

à-tête with him at your house, which gave me a very high opinion of his principles, when he was very young.

Mrs. Underdown lately received a letter from my brother, dated from Jonkoping. He had passed the Sound, and was in his way towards Stockholm. He was very much shocked by the rude surly manners of the common people in Denmark; and he is now charmed by the gentle civil behaviour of the Swedes. It must probably be from some strong difference of government, that so much difference should be found in people separated by so narrow a boundary. My brother's journey in Sweden has chiefly lain through woods, and he is exceedingly struck by the beauty of the trees in that country. I believe he would not have gone to Stockholm if he had been aware of the length of their miles; for it seems one Swedish mile is equal to eight English.

Privateering is such a vile, rapacious way of making war, and so debases, and brutalizes the minds of all concerned in it, that I think it is much to be wished that all the princes of the world would agree in prohibiting it. But when alas! will all the princes in the world agree in acting conformably to wisdom and humanity! Whenever they do, there will be no war in any shape or form. The meeting of the two fleets would probably

probably produce a most momentous event to this country. But probably there will be no such meeting. It seems pretty evident that the policy of the French, is not to fight; and that they will slip through Admiral Keppel's fingers. Adieu, my dearest friend, I hope you had the happiness of receiving Mr. Montagu quite well after his little tour. Have you read Eyelina, a novel, of which I hear a very high character; I am wishing much to see it, but it has not yet fallen in my way. Do tell me what you think of it.

LETTER CCXVI.

Deal, *October* 28, 1778.

By this time, my dear friend, I imagine you find the air of your own fire-side more delectable than the waters of Tunbridge. I hope, however, they have done their duty, and furnished you with a good supply of health for the winter. Besides her very handsome jointure, Mr. Dunbar has

has left his excellent and most amiable wife * his whole personal estate, which I suppose must be very considerable. It gives me great pleasure to find that he has done such noble justice to her merit; not only on her account, but as it reflects so much honor on his own memory. Indeed she is most fully entitled to every testimony of his gratitude, esteem, and affection. It is scarcely credible with what an unremitting and unwearied attention, her thoughts and her endeavours were perpetually employed to procure him every thing that could contribute to his ease, his comfort, or his amusement; and to alleviate the sufferings which he endured from miserable spirits, and a most unhappy constitution. Indeed her character, in all other respects, as well as her understanding, is of a very superior class. Poor soul! she will deeply feel the loss of one whom she so tenderly loved; but her piety and resignation cannot fail of a proportionable support.

Have you read my friend Mr. Vere's book †? It

* Afterwards wife of Joshua Iremonger, of Wherwell, in Hampshire, Esq. since deceased; a gentleman of singular merit, amiable in his manners, virtuous and religious in his conduct; of considerable learning, and of sound and acute understanding.

† "A physical and moral Enquiry into the Causes of that internal

It has but just arrived to me, and I have not read enough to form a judgment of it. Whatever it may be, you will honor a man, who, amidst all the avocations of very extensive commerce, could find opportunities for philosophical thinking. Commerce, which is, I believe, apt to contract most minds, always seemed to expand his. Trade is to be sure but a dull kind of subject to folks who do not get money by it; and yet he always talked on it, upon such liberal principles, that I have listened to him with pleasure. He was a younger son, among many others, of a father of a very small fortune, though of a very noble family, and by an unblemished uprightness, and very remarkable generosity of dealing, has from an original capital of only four hundred pounds, acquired a very considerable fortune, which he diffuses in a very liberal manner among his relations, and many others who need his assistance.

I hope there is no doubt at present, but that our dear Sylph will embark for England. Mr.

internal restlessness and disorder in Man which has been the complaint of all Ages." London. 1788. Mrs. Carter's uncle and Mr. Vere had been in partnership, as silk merchants, in Bishopsgate-street. Mr. Vere's family were supposed to have a claim to the title of Oxford, when it was given to that of Harley; but their documents had perished in a fire.

Vesey

Vesey has promised to follow, but the performance of his promise is not likely to be very rapid; for which we will not quarrel with him, if the delay proves the means of keeping her the longer with us. My nephew's duty waits on you. He is on the eve of going to college, and in his way to Oxford, means to pay his respects to you. I am, my dearest friend, most truly yours.

LETTER CCXVII.

Deal, *November* 23, 1778.

As it would have been the best paragraph in a long letter, which could inform me of your health, I sensibly felt the kindness of your writing, when you had time only for a very short one. I heartily return your congratulations on the arrival of our dear Sylph, and am quite pleased at your account of her health and good looks. Do not you honor her spirit, in taking the first opportunity of coming to us, instead of waiting till Lady B——— was ready. But she is a wiser woman than I take her, or any other woman

woman or man, to be, if she has found out the people who are to reform either our political, or moral state. Whether she mends the state or not, I am rejoiced she is safe arrived, for in all probability the longer she had delayed, the more difficulties she would have found in the way. If her remaining in Ireland always, would be a means of preventing certain irregularities in certain people, one certainly ought not to wish her to leave it. But as the said people will have their freaks whether she is on the other side the water or this, one may, I think, lawfully rejoice in getting her among us.

We agree most perfectly in our opinion of newspaper appeals. There seems to be such a rage of writing amongst all our public characters, as if they thought it was to supply all the deficiences of action. And, Oh lack! what writing, as somebody used to say, what *writation* it all is! You and I, my dear friend, have lived to see the mushroom growth of a new language in our own country, filled with phrases, which nobody could have understood when we were young.

What a scandalous figure does Lord ——— make in the public papers, and at the examination of ———'s and Roques! It is said, this monster had covenanted with his infamous Mrs. Sinclair to supply him four times in every week with two uncor-

uncorrupted servant maids. Fie upon you, fie upon you, to go to Crete for his Lordship's pedigree, when he is so evidently descended from the dragon which was slain by *St. George for England,* and which subsisted on the same kind of food. What a monster, and what a wicked wretch must she be who was so employed. The person who told me this shocking anecdote, received it from one who was present at the examination, and whom both you and I know, and whose veracity I am sure neither of us would question.

I cannot help feeling mortified at any instance of base or atrocious conduct in any of our nobility. There never yet existed, I believe, in any civil society, a situation so great and honorable in itself as that of a British peer! Born the hereditary legislator of a powerful empire, supported on the noble foundation of the best guarded liberty! and I always feel hurt, as an Englishwoman; whenever I see so respectable a character debased by such profligate vices, as would half disgrace the gibbet.

I agree with every thing you say relating to the probability of Lord P——— dying what is called a natural death, but indeed the East India transactions for some years past, form such a complication of wickedness, that the picking out one or two threads, will contribute very little to disentangle it.

I was

I was sorry to read in the papers the death of Mrs. Wright, who, I suppose, was the first genius in the world in her particular art *, and she seemed to have an enlarged and liberal mind.

My brother had a letter lately from Portsmouth, giving a sad account of the mutiny and dissentions among the sailors, who are all turned into partizans, and are eternally quarrelling about their two commanders †, which is rather a more serious affair than the newspaper squabbles. But indeed all is serious enough. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXVIII.

Deal, *December* 7, 1778.

Much joy to you, my dear friend, in the improvement of your pleasant parties, by the addition of the sweet Sylph; I quite envy you your happiness, but my turn will very soon come; I think she must have delighted more in your

* That of executing figures, and of taking likenesses in wax. She was an American, and a zealous patriot.

† Keppel and Palliser.

Russian importation, as a foreign curiosity, if she had not been before acquainted with the Princess Diskan, before whom all other Russian ladies must "hide their diminished heads."

The newspapers informed you of Mrs. Macaulay's extraordinary conduct, which however I do not agree with you in calling *strange*. When people go on for great part of their lives, in the ordinary track of human affairs, and actions, sometimes tolerably right, at other times moderately wrong, if they all of a sudden start out into some wild absurdity, it justly occasions a surprize. But Mrs. Macaulay has shewn herself a genius of so very eccentric a kind, that, except poor Dr. Wilson, who has aided and abetted her eccentricities, no body has any great reason to wonder at any thing she does. It is really painful to observe, that with parts and talents which under the direction of happier principles, would have made a very distinguished and respectable figure, she has contrived to render herself so consummately ridiculous, by a total want of all common sober sense *. Surely nothing ever equalled that farci-

* This language, however deserved, is rather warmer than Mrs. Carter generally made use of, except in cases of flagrant vice. It should be remembered that, though the Editor sees no reason why it should be omitted, it was written in the unreserved communication of intimate friendship.

cal

cal parade of foolery with which she suffered herself to be flattered, and almost worshipped, by that poor old wrong-headed firebrand of party, who now pays so dearly for his nonsense. I think one never heard of any body, above the degree of an idiot, who took pleasure in being so dressed out with the very rags and ribbons of vanity, like a queen in a puppet show. I hope the letter which you quote was not really written by herself, but that she contents herself with acting preposterously, and does not add any unnecessary disgrace to her sex, by expressing herself so very indecently.

Well, but after all, that you and I have commented upon, in the individual instance of Dr. Wilson and Mrs. Macaulay, it is upon the whole, "a mad world my masters." What do you think of the speeches in the senate? Did personal rage ever rise so high, or personal abuse ever sink so low, in such an assembly? Dark indeed is the cloud which hangs over our national prospects, and "vain is the help of man." But there is a gracious overruling providence, to which it is to be hoped, amidst the general folly and corruption of the times, there are numbers of wise and good people, who lift up their hearts, and recommend the interests of themselves and of their country. We have been so often on the brink of ruin, and

so often unexpectedly snatched back, that, I trust, however unworthy we may be, we may still depend on the divine interposition in our favor.

I hope you are not the worse for this tempestuous weather. The wind on Thursday night was fearfully terrific, and, I apprehend, must have made sad havock at sea, though happily little or no mischief befel the ships in the Downs. The rain is so driven into all my windows, that I cannot keep my paper dry. I have not read "Anticipation *;" but what you and my brother say of it will certainly tempt me. The respects of all my family wait on you, my dearest friend, and I am, yours, &c.

LETTER CCXIX.

Clarges Street, *April* 21, 1779.

You would, my dearest friend, have received my immediate thanks for your kind letter,

* "Anticipation" of the speeches that were to be made in the ensuing parliament. A humorous political pamphlet, by Mr. Tickell.

but

but I was out of town and did not return till last night, too late for the post. I cannot help rejoicing to find that you resisted the allurements of Sandleford. The blossoms, and the nightingales may be excellent juleps, but your health requires a more effective kind of remedy, which I most sincerely hope you will find in the Bath waters.

I told you I was going to visit my very old friend Mrs. Talbot. I had the comfort of finding her quite well, and most happily fixed in a quiet cheerful retreat for the remainder of her days. It is very edifying and pleasant to see the perpetual attention, and affectionate kindness with which Mr. and Mrs. Cornwall endeavour to render the lives of the two good old people under their care, as happy as possible. Poor Mr. Talbot is much sunk and enfeebled by a paralytic disorder; but my much esteemed old friend, in her ninetieth year, has all her metaphysical sensibilities in full force, and is perfectly awake to every advantage of her situation. I was pleased to observe a proof that poor Mr. Talbot's mind is not so much asleep as it appears to be, for, on my praising the beauty of Chart Park, he told me with great vivacity that all those trees I so much admired were planted by himself.

In walking about Guildford, where we slept, I was very much delighted with the "*cruda viridisque*

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disque senectus" of an hospital and school founded by Edward VI, which, with all their venerable antiquity, appear in such excellent preservation, and perfect repair, that I could not help hoping that the charity is equally well conducted in other respects. We next went to the Sheep Leas, of which I cannot give you so comfortable an account, for this sweet spot, is alas! a ruin; the grass is so most miserably neglected and worn out, that, compared with the verdure of any other part of the country, it looked like fallow-land. Painshill looked very insignificant, and very dull, after the sweet cheerful pastoral beauties of Chart. We came home by Hampton Court, where the noble air of Wolsey's Palace, compared with the modern buildings, affected my mind with the same kind of difference without doors, as the portraits of Vandyke and Cornelius Janson, compared with Sir G. Kneller's, did within.

I called on Mrs. Howe this morning, who spoke with great pleasure of a speech which Sir W. Howe had made in the House, and which she mentioned as having fully justified his conduct of the war. I believe it is to be printed. I saw a young officer just arrived, having had a passage of only eighteen days from New York. Among other things I enquired whether the Americans, by the war, were not obliged to neglect the cultivation

vation of their lands: he said, to such a degree that they were threatened with famine, as our ships intercept so much of the provisions sent to them by the French.

I met Mr. Stuart yesterday, and enquired after the progress of your palace, which he told me went on very prosperously. He is grown fat, and looks very happy with his young wife, who was with him. I pitied her, for seeming so *depaïsée* among gentlefolks. She had on a very odd becoming kind of dress, which made her look like a foreigner, and was I think on that account advantageous to her, as it seemed to assign a reason for the difference of her manners from the rest of the company. Perhaps he had furnished her mantua-maker with some Grecian patterns.

We have had some fine fruitful showers, but sometimes accompanied by very high winds. One morning about six o'clock it was most particularly violent, accompanied with a clap of thunder, I think the loudest I ever heard, that did not do any harm; but the lightning did great damage in a farm belonging to Mrs. Bouverie, in Kent, and struck a church near it, in so violent a manner, that nothing is left standing but the walls.

Poor Mrs. Vesey has been very much terrified by an account that Mr Vesey has had another attack; he is however better, and she seems some-

what

what easier. Adieu, my very dear friend, I hear no news; and it is a very old story to tell you how very truly I am yours, &c.

LETTER CCXX.

Deal, *July* 24, 1779.

INDEED, my dear friend, *vous autres gens celebres, payez bien vos avantages;* if you are to read and answer all the fine things, that all people do themselves the honor of writing to you, from all parts of the habitable world. I write this quite in the spirit of vexation and spite, that any degree of that health, which is of so much essential consequence to the happiness of those who love you, should be lavished away on the vanity of those who think it very creditable to themselves, to be able to produce a letter from you, because you are a genius, or a fine lady, and have writ a book. Do, pray, seriously avoid answering any letters, except what are absolutely necessary. I think no body has a better right to urge this point than myself, who really and truly wish not

to

to receive more than half a dozen lines, just to inform me how you do, and look with an evil eye on your second side of writing. And yet nobody honors your genius more than I do, nor reads your book oftener over, nor with more admiration and pleasure. But it is yourself, and not the things about you, that I love; and it would be mighty little consolation to me, for the loss of my friend, that she had writ a book that would so long survive her.

I congratulate you on the pleasure you received from Mr. Montagu's performance at Harrow. May he on every other occasion requite your tenderness and care of him. I rejoice too that you have compleated your purchase, and I hope you will long live to enjoy the fruits of it. I shall be glad when you are reposing, after all your fatigues, in the shades of Sandleford, which I think you will soon be wishing for, as a shelter from the dog-star, which must rage with great fury among crowds and smoke, and brick houses*.

* "Omitte mirari beatæ
Fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ."
—— "jam Procyon furit,
Et stella vesani Leonis
Sole dies referente siccos." HOR.

If the new house, or palace, as Mrs. Carter calls it, in Portman-square, had been finished, the "Molem propinquam nubibus arduis" might have been justly added to the quotation.

Our warm weather began yesterday, but the fresh sea-breeze renders it to me a very delightful temperament. Our farmers seem determined that in this country we shall have nothing else to cool us. I seldom walk out but I find a subject of lamentation in the fall of some favorite tree, beneath whose shade my youth has reposed and studied. This would be a very serious grievance to me, if I did not recollect how far advanced I am in my journey, I trust, to a country planted with trees of perpetual verdure, against which no feller shall ever level his destructive axe. At present, one must learn to be contented with that devastation and ruin, which is the sad lot of mortal existence.

I heard of Mrs. Peers being at the races, but have heard nothing of her being here, and begin to think she will not come; if she does, I will certainly deliver all your civilities to her. I rejoice to hear that our dear Sylph is well, but what will she do, poor soul, when you are not at hand to infuse a few cordial drops into her patriotic draught of despondency. In a letter I had from her last night, she confirms the delightful hope of our seeing her and the dear blue room next winter.

I yesterday had some conversation with a gentleman on the subject of Mr. Bryant's work, of which

which I found he thought pretty much in the same way with myself. He had seen it in manuscript, and wonderfully *ingenious,* as it now is, I discovered it would have been much more so, if his friends had not prevailed on him to reject several passages. They were going on lopping most unmercifully, till at length the poor author's paternal tenderness made him scream and squall at such a lamentable rate, that they could proceed no further. As I found my informant had seen the other volumes, I could not help enquiring into the fate of Troy town, about which we classical people are naturally so much interested, that I believe even you, with all your admiration of Mr. Bryant's extirpating spirit, would find it difficult to consent to give up the Homeric heroes. My gentleman smiled, and said very little would be said on that subject; and I thought by his manner, that the annihilation of Troy, and *the people and things about Troy,* was one of the strange fancies, which the critics on the manuscript had endeavoured to suppress, or at least to correct. Do not mention any thing of all this, which I write merely for your amusement, as I do not wish the person to be guessed at who was my informer. I highly esteem Mr. Bryant's character, and honor his immense reading, as much as, in general, I disapprove his system. Adieu,

my

my dear friend, take care of yourself, and when you feel over fatigued, take a good dose of your Tunbridge opiate, the Prince of Abyssinia, till you fall comfortably asleep in your arm-chair. Considering our frequent squabbles on this subject, it is a wonderful instance of moderation in me, I think, to forbear wishing you bad dreams.

LETTER CCXXI.

Deal, *August* 26, 1779.

As I have always endeavoured, my dear friend, to keep my imagination and my common sense in separate apartments, that they should not usurp each other's rights, my social feelings have been no less exercised than my poetical melancholy, by the state of the weather for the last three weeks. It grieves me to hear of the mischief the rain has done to your property, in which the welfare and comfort of so many others are concerned; these, however, you will not allow to suffer; but I am interested for your *menus plaisirs*, and should be sorry that the

the fly in the turnips, or the smut in the wheat, should retard the completion of your elegant room. I must, however, thankfully rejoice in the reflection of your being in such a situation, that inclement weather will not deprive you of any of the real comforts, or even ornaments of life. Our prospects in this neighbourhood are by no means unpromising; even the farmers allow that the crops have not been injured. This light airy country, like a cheerful mind, soon shakes off its troubles, and after weeks of deluging rain, in a few hours recovers all its gaiety and beauty, and grows perfectly dry, and practicable for walking. I have had a friend staying with me, and the incessant rain made me despair of taking her a very favorite walk of mine, and which I wished particularly to shew her; but by the good temper of our soil and climate, half a day's sunshine enabled us to ramble over the ruins of a respectable old mansion *, which I remember in full preservation in the days of my youth, though it was then in a deserted state.

* Northbourn-Court, about three miles from Deal. This place has been mentioned before. The monument spoken of below, is to the memory of Sir Edwin Sandys, Bart. He erected it in his life-time, and left a blank space for an inscription. It still remains in the same state, though he left four daughters who had numerous descendants.

Often

Often have I sat in a marble portico, looking on the gardens, which in front were shaded by dark trees, beyond which arose three terraces, which used to remind me of the hanging walks of Babylon. Often have I wandered through the gallery lined with cedar, and an elegant ornament of gold in every pannel, and of a sufficient length to admit two superb Gothic chimneys. Often have I left my gay companions to their laughing sports, to enjoy the solemn amusement of looking into the chapel, softly illuminated by the last rays of the setting sun. Only think, my dear friend, what my romantic imagination must have suffered, when this venerable old mansion, so well adapted to the feelings of poetic melancholy, was pulled down, for the sordid consideration of selling the materials! Perhaps it is an idle kind of superstitious fancy, but it seems to me, that when a fair inheritance is transmitted to a family, they ought to feel a certain degree of tenderness to the abode of the ancestors from whom it is derived, which ought at least to sink quietly by the silent depredations of time, and not be torn down by the rude hand of human violence. If a decent regard is proper to be shewn to the place in which they lived, a more awful respect seems due to that in which their ashes repose in death. In a small church, very near the ruins I have been describing,

describing, is a noble monument raised to one of the family, of great expence, and excellent sculpture, which a very little care would preserve unimpaired through ages; from absolute neglect it is now perishing, by vegetable corrosion, and want of repair of the cement. I cannot express to you the anger and indignation we both felt at this most scandalous and unpardonable neglect and carelessness.

Indeed I perfectly agree with you in the article of dragons; I have long been of the same opinion, and it has saved me many a painful feeling, or at least mitigated it, to which I used to be subject, before I was convinced that dragons are not the same terrible monsters, to those to whom they are familiar, as I have always found them to myself. Indeed I am so great a coward, that I scarcely ever was attacked by a dragon in my life, that I could bear to make a subject of conversation.

As neither you nor I are patriots, any more than we are courtiers, I may congratulate you on the safe arrival of the West India fleet. I had the pleasure of seeing it fill the Downs, and it was a very affecting sight. Whether one considers it as a great national object, or as a blessing to so many individuals, as must be deeply interested in its safety, it was impossible not to be struck

struck with very lively sentiments of joy and gratitude for its preservation.

I suppose our fears like our fashions travel into the country, when they are worn out in the capital. All the time that the people in London were in such strong terrors of an invasion, we thought nothing about it in this place. Ever since the alarm has grown quiet in town, it has been strongly taken up here; and some people have made preparations for their escape. The terror now, I think, is beginning to dwindle away. I hope by the time Mr. Montagu and you mean to set out for Mount Edgcumbe, all alarms of invasion will be over there, and every where else. The weather is glorious, and I hope will continue during your excursion. Adieu, my dearest friend

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LETTER CCXXII.

Deal, *October* 18, 1779.

My dearest friend,

I RECEIVED your letter in Bolton-row, where we breakfasted on Friday morning. Our dear

dear Sylph and Mrs. Hancock looked exceedingly well; and Mr. Vesey's countenance seemed extremely altered for the better, since I saw him the week before. I suppose you know he has some thoughts of taking Mrs. Digby's house in Clarges-street. You know our dear Sylph, in default of a dragon, has always an objection ready to every thing, that naturally tends to the accomplishment of what she most wishes. I begged her to be as passive upon this occasion, as she was on the general destination of the winter, and I hope and trust she will leave Mr. Vesey to follow his own devices. Though both you and I shall be sorry to part with the dear blue room in Bolton-row, yet we shall be sure to find a pleasant and delightful room, of whatever shape, size, or colour, wherever she resides.

We left the country just in time, for the weather has been such as to put an end to all rural parties. We have had some very fine showers these two days, with a most beautiful mixture of sunshine. In such days the sea appears in very high beauty from the variety of its coloring, and I could admire it for hours, without being tired.

Have you read Mr. Keate's Sketches? It was our evening amusement at Mill-hill; and I think it a very pretty book for such kind of reading. I am told Mr. Walpole was caught by the story

of the Sisters (as the author designed he should be) and made an enquiry after the Louvain manuscript. We were sometimes vexed with Mr. Keate for being facetious, when we wished to be grave, particularly in the solemn scene at La Trappe, where all the awful ideas he had raised by the tolling of the midnight passing bell, are disconcerted by the ridiculous comparison of his curiosity to that of a chambermaid.

Did not your blood run cold, and your heart ache at reading the terrible and affecting accounts of the Serapis and Quebec? One of our neighbours has lost his eldest son, who was a marine officer in the Serapis, and a very promising good young man. Alas! how many other parents are in the same unhappy situation! Are not you impatient for the hanging of Paul Jones? This villain, before he figured as a pirate, and a traitor to his country, was guilty of two murders. He escaped punishment for the one, by the sailing of a ship, which carried away the evidence that would have condemned him; and the other by breaking jail. His father, poor man, is, or was, gardener to Lord Galloway, and, I hear, bears a most excellent character; if so, how very much he is to be pitied.

I hope, my dear friend, to hear very soon that you are quite well, and am

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCXXIII.

Deal, *November* 16, 1779.

This letter, I hope, my dear friend, will greet you quietly and comfortably settled by your fire-side in Hill-street, where, by a prudent and sober regulation of your expences, not meaning of your guineas, but of the stock of health which you have acquired during the summer, I hope it will hold out, and answer all the heavy demands you make on it in the winter.

I am glad you have determined to let your house, which would certainly be injured by standing empty. Indeed, it would be very vexatious to think that an abode, where for so many years, the human genius had been regaled with so much elegant entertainment, should be consigned over to the rats. In my opinion the best thing that could happen to you in the spring is, that some one would buy it over your head; you would then have no further trouble about it, nor would you have, *ni feu ni lieu*, but be driven *mal gré bon gré* to Bath, to drink the waters with the same success as last year I should hope. By

what I hear of the progress of your palace in Portman-square, it does not seem very probable that it will be habitable time enough to prevent your following any devices which you may choose to pursue in the year 1780.

This letter was began four days ago, but alas, my head would not allow me to finish it; and by your's yesterday received, I learn that you are arrived safe in Hill-street. I am half inclined, now that I know you are there, to be very uneasy least you should catch the London epidemical cold; but *Iliacos intra muros*, and extra, for people are just as sickly in the country. At Dover it has been very fatal. In this place, thank God, it has been very favorable. But if we are spared by the *Lethifer annus*, we can do the work of death for ourselves. A set of smugglers (as it is very probably supposed) shot into a Custom House boat last week, and grievously wounded two of the men. One who was shot through the ribs, the lungs, and the shoulder is likely to recover, but there are very small hopes of the other. It is very much to be regretted, that the villains cannot be discovered on many accounts, and particularly as there will perhaps be dreadful work in consequence of this affair, as the people belonging to the cutter threaten vengeance on every smuggling crew that comes

in

in their way. It is very desirable that the guilty should be taken and legally punished; but such a blind tumultuary revenge is a horrible thing.

I suppose the report of Jamaica's being taken was some vile lie to raise the price of sugar. However, it would be no great surprize if that, and every other foreign island and continent was torn from us. Fare them well! but God in his mercy preserve Great Britain and Ireland to us. I wish the spirited votes of the Irish Parliament may prevail on our ministers to grant them, what they might have granted with so much better a grace last year. But this is a procrastinating age. Our armies march too late, our fleets sail too late, our commissioners negotiate too late, and our concessions are made so late that some will not receive, and others not thank us for them.

Did you ever read such writings as General Burgoyne's, at least so much of it, as I have seen in the papers? Alas, I saw a paragraph to-day, a sad consequence, among many others, of his fatal expedition. Sir Francis Clarke's mother has never recovered the loss of a most amiable son, and is just dead of a broken heart, a happy event for herself, but a most melancholy circumstance for her two orphan daughters, who are

deprived

deprived by this stroke of a most excellent mother.

I am glad your rebellion in the North is quiet. Surely it must be the pure love of rebelling that could induce people so well provided for, as you describe them, to make an insurrection. One cannot imagine against whom they should fight, unless it be the bright luminary of day, because he does not descend into their subterraneous abodes.

Have you seen Poems and a Tragedy, by Mr. Lucas? I have not, but hear the play is strongly recommended by Dr. Johnson, though the managers have rejected it. I am promised a sight of it.

Ever yours, my dear friend.

LETTER CCXXIV.

Deal, *December 26*, 1779.

Though it seemed very long to me since I last had the pleasure of hearing from you, my dearest friend; I did not teize you by enqui-

enquiries, as the multiplicity of your business and engagements might so easily account for your not writing; but, to my sorrow, I last night received a letter from our dear Sylph, informing me how ill you have been; I am very thankful to God you are so much better, and shall hope in a few days to have a confirmation of it under your own hand; but remember only two lines on this most interesting subject, upon all others, I am happy to say, I shall very soon converse with you *de vive voix*. I mean to be in London on Wednesday, and shall hope to see you in the course of the day.

Do you remember the account, in Plutarch I think it is, or Xenophon, of the excessive transports of the Lacedemonians on the retreat of Epaminondas, and the author's observation? However, I rejoice at any thing like a defeat, or disgrace to our ambitious and perfidious enemies, the French, and particularly under the conduct of D'Estaing. With regard to America, I regret every advantage which may help to protract that fatal struggle. I quite long to hear what reception the late Acts of Parliament meet in Ireland. God grant that all may end quietly and amicably there. My fingers are so chilled I can scarce hold my pen. Adieu, my dear friend; every happi-

happiness attend you. I long for Wednesday, and am yours most truly.

LETTER CCXXV.

Clarges Street, *March* 30, 1780.

It was a great comfort to me, my dear friend, to hear that you had got so well through your journey. May it be an omen of still greater improvement in your health, now you are arrived at the end of it.

Nothing new, I think, has happened since you left town, except the elopement of Miss —— to Scotland with Mr. ——. Be so good with my love to tell Miss Gregory what it is fit that all young ladies should know in this enlightened age, that the most approved method in such cases at present, is procuring, by dint of bribing the servants, a duplicate of the key of the area gate. The young lady's mama kept all the others safely under her pillow every night. How much is a mother to be pitied who is obliged to take such precau-

precautions against her own child, and how much is that child to be despised, who renders those precautions necessary! but I fear there was some great original error in the young lady's education, for had she early had right and proper principle instilled into her mind, she would not, at the age of eighteen, have disgraced herself and family so compleatly. The story goes, that the mother said, she was glad the girl had had a good dinner the day she went off, as it was the last she ever would have. I hope, for the honor of maternal feelings, this is not true; for surely no mother could speak so lightly of the misery of her child, however much she was displeased with her.

As there is no House of Commons at present, I have not heard of any new duel. Indeed, it is wonderful when they do meet, that, according to the maxims of the world, there should not be one after every debate. Perhaps the only way to put an end both to cause and effect, would be if, in some such *rencontre*, one of the parties was shot, and the other hanged for it. For as nobody can have any strong natural wish either to be shot or to be hanged, an effective proof of the possibility of such an event, might render gentlemen somewhat more temperate in their abuse of each other.

All our friends are well. I am to dine with

our

our Sylph to-morrow, to meet Mr. Pery, who is to return the next day to Ireland. It is hoped, I know not upon what ground that his transaction in England will render every thing quite quiet on the other side St. George's Channel.

I suppose you heard before you left town, that Mrs. Trevor is removed to the reward of her exemplary virtues. I had a note lately from Mrs. L. Rice, who is her executrix, to inform me that she had left me a legacy of fifty pounds, as a testimony of her friendship. I feel a very affecting melancholy pleasure in the honor done me by such a proof of the kindness of this excellent woman. Poor Lady Frances has not yet been told of her death, though it is supposed she guesses it, by her saying one day she should never see her again. She will certainly see her again in a world where she will be united with her in all the joys of virtuous friendship, as she was here in its trials and sorrows. Mrs. Walsingham I hear is better, but I believe still confined to her chamber. The loss of good Mrs. Trevor must have been particularly distressing to her at a time when she is so incapable of making any exertions.

The Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus are coming next week to Bath. I heard the Bishop mention yesterday with great approbation a ser-

mon

mon by a Cheshire clergyman, preached on the Fast, and very different in its principles from Dr. Watson's, which I never read, but I believe you did. Adieu, my dear friend; God grant success to the Bath waters, and restore you in perfect health to

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCXXVI.

Clarges Street, *April* 18, 1780.

Indeed, my dear friend, I agree with you in lamenting that the idleness which is often so necessary a part of the regimen of sickness, should be applied to waste the activity and usefulness of health. But I fear this evil is not restricted to water drinking places, but that the young people who squander their mornings in the streets of Bath, would employ them to little better purpose any where else. The source of the mischief is from the imprudence of their parents, who have not accustomed them from early youth to employ the moments as they fly;

habits of idleness are easily formed, and very hard to be broken, and parents do not sufficiently impress on young minds the inestimable value of time, that most precious of all the Almighty's gifts if well employed, but if thrown away, alas, who shall say what may be the consequences.

I rejoice to hear of your amended health; God grant you such a portion of it as may enable you to enjoy all the other blessings which he has allotted you. Our dear Sylph is quite well, but I think Mr. Vesey looked worse on Thursday than I ever saw him, but the weather might in some degree occasion that, for we have for the last week been petrified by snow, hail, and frost, which have rendered the air very penetrating.

You will see in the papers the history of yesterday's debate in the Senate. I have seen so few people to-day, that I cannot tell you whether it is supposed that Lord North will yet stand his ground. For my part, who know nothing of the matter, I should think he will. If he does, the people will perhaps get something by the struggle; and I hope it is not too severe to believe, that some of the opposition at least, will be heartily disappointed by a success which they did not intend. It must be said, that our political system seems to be every day more and more

embrouillé.

embrouillé. God grant the evil spirit of discord may be restrained within the walls of St. Stephen's chapel, and, indeed, I trust it will; for whatever you may have heard of our insurrections, we are all very quiet without those said walls. All thinking and impartial people, however, must feel a deep concern at the situation of public affairs. Many things certainly call for redress; but the conduct of those who demand it is so wild and unreasonable, that there is little prospect of its being obtained.

There is certain intelligence from Dunkirk, that there is still a terrible distemper in the French fleet at Brest. They are so much distressed for men, that they press poor old fishermen of seventy. We have here the same strange want of intelligence as ever, and nobody can tell if the French fleet has, or has not, been in the Channel.

Every body speaks with horror of Lord Corke's libel, as a most wicked subornation. It is said he now begins to think of withdrawing it. But Lady Corke's friends wish it should be proceeded in. Indeed, it is to be wished, that this dark affair might be dragged into open day-light, and society be guarded against the wretches who have had any concern in it. Her Ladyship seems to have acted in this trying affair with all possi-

possible prudence. She called all her servants together, told them they would be examined on oath, and charged them to speak the truth. One of them begged to speak with her in private, but this she utterly refused. I hear that since the examination of the servants, she has been told, that she has nothing to apprehend from their evidence.

Have you read a letter to Dr. Watson on his Sermon? If not, I much wish you would. It will take but little of your time, and I think it is admirable. It was lent me by Mr. Vesey, who, to his honor, was so candid as to speak very advantageously of it. I was at Miss Hamilton's last night, where I met Mr. Smelt, who, with that easy good humour, which is so natural, and sits so gracefully upon innocence, read us a satire upon himself. No doubt you must have seen the *Watch*. I heard of it long ago, but never met with it till last night. It is founded on an infamous party lie; and I was glad to have an opportunity of hearing the real story. It raised my indignation, and at the same time gave me concern, that the author should have disgraced his talents, and his profession, by adopting such a dirty falsehood.

Have you read an account in the papers of a very extraordinary *fête* that is soon to be exhibited

bited at the Haymarket? I should be inclined to think it a sequel to the bottle conjuror. However, I heard last night of a lady who had taken places. Gladiators, and Olympic games seem an odd kind of entertainment for ladies. But a still more shocking scene is advertised of the inside of Bedlam. It is a pity the inventor should not make an additional scene of the amusing spectacle of gibbets and wheels. The schools for declamation, I hear, are astonishingly crowded. I dread the torrent of impertinence with which they will overrun the town. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXXVII.

Clarges Street, *May* 8, 1780.

It was not till last night that I got your letter, but as I had heard from Mrs. Scott that you was going on quite well, I was not uneasy, and beg you will never write to me, but when it quite suits your convenience; as I contrive to hear of you very frequently. If you love

love our Bedlam, return to us, and you will have amusement enough. Amidst all the howlings that one hears, that every body is ruined, there were eight hundred people assembled, by tickets of a guinea and a half each, at Mr. Texier's *fête*. It was well for the Opera House that it was filled by such polite spectators, or probably it would have been pulled down, they were so enraged by their disappointment. But had our fine folks any right to put themselves in a passion at being cheated by Mr. Texier? Might it not be said upon this occasion to many a Lord and Lady, who must have known upon what account Mr. Texier left his own country,

Prudens emisti vitiosum?

However, I hear it is a measure settled, that he is to be supported, and accordingly there are eighty subscribers of five guineas each, for the enacting five plays by Mr. Texier and Co. Still we are a ruined people, and the nobility and gentry declare they cannot pay their milk women. Would they pay them any better if every tax was annihilated?

It is thought the Speaker will really resign. Some say for want of health, and others suspect a manœuvre. I still think Lord North will stand his

his ground; and since I wrote last, I find many other people are of the same opinion. I have heard but upon what foundation I know not, that Mr. Fox is to be joined by Mr. Sheridan in the canvas for Westminster. You see the Upper House has thrown out the Contractors' bill. I am sorry for it, for though it would probably answer no great purpose, yet the rejection of it may occasion some squabble between the two Houses, and we certainly have already as much squabbling, as any moderate lover of squabbles can wish.

There is a new school of oratory set up, where, on a Sunday evening, for the price of sixpence, people may go and hear the discussion of knotty points of divinity. There were five hundred people there on Sunday. The subject was Predestination. The opponent to this doctrine said it was a damnable opinion, on which a gentlewoman (for I am not sure that ladies go to divinity lectures) who was most probably on the other side of the question, hissed the speaker. She was rebuked for this by the moderator, and told it was only for serpents to hiss. All the other oratorical institutions will only make people impertinent; but such a method of treating subjects of divinity will certainly help to make them

mad. Indeed it appears to me that it must be attended with very serious ill consequences.

Mr. Madan is just going to publish his book on Polygamy. Lady Huntingdon wrote to him, to beg he would suppress it, and added that she could send him a paper signed by above three thousand names, with the same request. He replied that if there were six thousand names, they should not prevent the publication of his book. A young friend of mine, to whom Mr. Madan gave an account of his extraordinary system, told me that it is founded on the principle that every man shall be obliged to marry any woman whom he has seduced. But the book will soon speak for itself, and to that I refer you. Let me soon hear from you, my dear friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

Deal, *June* 22, 1780.

Very heartily do I join with you, my dear friend, in thankfulness for the removal of the

the late dreadful confusions, and for the hope of our meeting again in society under the protection of legal government. Like you I was apprehensive that some dark design lay concealed under the late riots. Yet it is, I believe, very certain, that there was not a single person ostensibly engaged in these execrable outrages, except the very lowest, and the very vilest of the human race. So that amidst all these miseries we might derive the comfort of seeing, that the people of England are by no means so ready to be engaged in a rebellion, as some bad persons may have hoped, and some good ones have certainly feared. Unless the lawless crew of two or three hundred black-guards, by whom we have lately been scourged, are to be called *the people* *.

But, my dear friend, are you not scandalized to the last degree, at the wretched behaviour of the magistrates, in suffering an unarmed, undisciplined rabble, of a very inconsiderable number, to carry fire and devastation, and terror through such a city without controul? Before they employed their eloquence in dictating petitions and remonstrances for the other parts of government, it would have been more for the benefit of the

* A very common case, of which instances are not wanting in later days.

community if they had studied the duties of their own office. In the first surprize of unexpected danger, the wisest may stand aghast; but surely there was time enough for them to recover from their consternation. Much might be said with regard to the behaviour of a body of greater dignity, but you are not within reach of a long discussion.

My brother saw the first assembling of the rioters at Bath, and immediately went to acquaint the magistrates, and did all he could to persuade them to exert themselves. The mischief might have been prevented with the greatest ease, for the rioters were half an hour in forcing open the door of the chapel. A constable, frightened out of his wits, asked what could be done against six hundred men? My brother told him he had been in the place, and that there was not in the lower room above six or seven, and that he was positively sure that those above did not amount to one hundred. But the constable was not to be persuaded, he afterwards took two gentlemen whom he met, and convinced them by their own eyes, that his statement was just, but it was all of none effect. I have just been reading the King's speech, which gave me great pleasure; and I hope it will help to give all reasonable people a favorable opinion of his intentions.

We had a most delightful journey from Bath, take it all in all. We left it on the Monday as I mentioned to you in my last, and slept at Cirencester. We had found the Wiltshire Downs sufficiently unamusing; but they are really quite pretty, compared with the dullness of Gloucestershire*. This was the most tiresome of all our journies, in a very hot day, without a single object that could for a minute help us to forget the fatigue, except when we drove through any village or town, for detestable as the country is, the towns and villages are very pretty, in good repair, and light, and clean, and airy. The next day we stopped to take a view of Fairford church, which has twenty-eight large windows, of the finest painted glass we had ever seen. Besides the uncommon beauty of the colors, some of the figures are so justly designed, that it is wonderful they are not all so. An English merchant, who took them in a prize ship going to Rome in the reign of Harry the VIIth, brought them home, and built the Church, which is a very handsome

* It should be recollected that this account of Gloucestershire relates only to the road from Bath towards Oxford, over the Wolds. It might otherwise be deemed an atrocious libel on that beautiful and varied county, abounding in scenery and prospect. The Editor accompanied Miss Sharpe and Mrs. Carter on this journey.

struc-

structure, to the windows. Do not you honor this noble appropriation of the wealth of an English merchant? How much more respectable than the practice of modern Nabobs, who lavish their immense riches in bribing electors, and in raising the price of luxuries all round them! On Tuesday evening we, to our very great satisfaction and delight, exchanged the stone fences, and dull plains of Gloucestershire, for the green hedges and smiling prospects of Berkshire, and arrived very safe at my brother's at Wettenham, where we spent three days, on one of which we dined at the Bishop of Landaff's. We dined with the dear Sylph as we came through London, and arrived at Deal last Thursday, where I am glad to repose for the most part of the year. My head, upon the whole, has been rather better than worse during the journey. Indeed, I could not venture upon such excursions, if Miss Sharpe's perfect knowledge of the state of my health, and constant attention to it, did not obviate all difficulties.

I do, indeed, honor the spirit and conduct of Sir George Rodney, and grieve for him, as well as the nation, that he was so scandalously deserted by some of his captains. I hope soon to hear that your health continues as it was, a circumstance

stance that will give infinite pleasure to my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCXXIX.

Deal, *September* 15, 1780.

Do pray, my dear friend, be so good as to consider, that the act of living in general, is absolutely a *sine qua non* to the living in your house in Portman-square in particular. It is terrifying to hear you talk of bricklayers and stone-masons in your last letter, and at the same time find you propose to inhabit the house in which they are employed by November. I think you would not naturally be inclined to do any thing rashly; yet the temptation of being settled in your new abode is so very seducing, that I cannot help the impertinence of cautioning you to be very sure that your ceilings and stucco, &c. are perfectly dry, before you hazard a constitution so very delicate as yours, to the least danger of damps.

I have

I have no personal acquaintance with Mr. Gipps*, but am told his character is most remarkably good, and he certainly is universally beloved and esteemed at Canterbury. Indeed, his election is the fairest testimony in his favor, for they would not suffer him to be at a sixpence expence on the occasion; but the electors defrayed the whole. Lord Newhaven, I believe, had not the least suspicion that he should be ejected. Nor would he, as I am informed, but for the unlucky measure of his endeavouring to introduce Sir H. D. which so disobliged some of the principal people at Canterbury, that they determined to bring in Mr. Gipps. Lord Newhaven had a great many votes, especially among the poorer electors, to whom he always has been a very liberal and kind benefactor, as well by relieving their poverty, as by doing them every other good office in his power.

Have you read Mr. Burke's address to Bristol on his declining the poll. His friends will congratulate themselves on his return to the flowery paths of science, and the endearments of social life; and if he is wise enough to be superior to

* Father to the present amiable and respectable member for Rippon, of whom, if propriety did not forbid it, the Editor's inclination would lead him to say much more.

ambi-

ambition, he will be rejoiced at an opportunity of quitting the thorny intricacies, and vexatious disappointments of party connections. In the same paper there is a long heavy lamentable letter of Sir G. S *. It is curious that amongst all his writings, he never, I think, gives the least hint about his own Popish act, which gave occasion to such dreadful consequences.

I do most sincerely rejoice that you are returned from the smoke and heat, and business of London, to fresh air and tranquillity, to basking on the lawn, or sitting under the shade of your groves at Sandleford. I most heartily congratulate you on having so delightful a subject of contemplation in the testimonies you receive of the amiable character of Mr. Montagu.

I had not heard of the separation of the noble Earl, and his political chaplain †. Their union always seemed a strange heterogeneous mixture, and it is no wonder they should fly off from each other. Gratian says somewhere, that "all are fools who do appear to be such, and one half of those who do not." Of this latter class, I take those wise men to be, who treat any information

* Sir George Saville.

† Perhaps the Earl of Shelburne, afterwards Marquis of Lansdown, and Dr. Price.

with

with contempt, where they think there is any thing contemptible in the informers. If you have heard the story of the music mistress, who foretold the advertisement which has occasioned so much wonder, you will understand what I mean, if I thought you had not heard it I would tell it to you. I am very sorry to hear that Lady Mahon is in such declining health, it grieves one's heart to think of two or three lovely little children so early deprived of so amiable a mother.

The poor people of Dover have laboured hard to make an election bustle; but to so little effect that they have been obliged to chuse their former representatives. They offered the town to Admiral Drake and Mr. Middleton, but both declined the honor. The Admiral is sent for to command a department of the fleet, so we have no flag in the Downs; we have, however, a better shew at present of the West India ships which are safely arrived. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCXXX.

Bennett-street, Bath, *December* 18, 1780.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear friend, for the kind information of your safe arrival in town, where I hope you will enjoy the good effects of the weeks you passed at Bath. I am glad to hear so prosperous an account of our friends. Our poor Sylph indeed is not in a situation that can contribute much to her pleasure; but it engages her in an employment that does honour to her virtue.

Our party is pretty much in the same state you left it. Bath grows more populous every day, as I hear from the reports of others, for I have never yet once been at the rooms myself; so I certainly do not counteract the effect of the waters by a dissipated life. I hear that the lady in the Crescent, who was so unsuccessful in her attempts upon you, has been more successful, or more fortunate, in her application to their Graces of M———h; and that she makes a ball for them on Wednesday next, to the great dismay of the ladies interested for Mr. Fisher's benefit, which is appointed for the same day.

A sermon

A sermon was preached lately here at one of the fine chapels, to a congregation of fine people; the clergyman took for his text: "I "speak it to your shame." He told them that he heartily concurred with St. Paul, and, from his text, took occasion to draw such a picture of their life and conversation, that if it did not produce the effect of making them ashamed, it seems has made them very angry.

Lord and Lady Howe, Mr. and Mrs. D'Oyley are arrived here since you left us. Mr. Duane bewailed himself to me in the pump-room, that he had missed seeing you, from his fear of intruding while you were sitting for your picture. *Apropos* of your picture. Every body says it is very like. I cannot say it quite pleases me. It is certainly like, but it gives me an idea of a French translation of a Grecian face. Dr. Manningham met me yesterday on the pump-room stairs, and obligingly shewed me a letter from Mr. Montagu on his nephew's recovery, which did equal credit to his head and his heart.

I hope by an anecdote which I think I related to you, the Emperor King * is likely to be a less

* "L'Empereur et Roi," was the style used at that time by the Emperors of Germany. For they had no regal powers as Emperors. They were Kings of Hungary and Bohemia, and Emperors of Germany.

bustling

bustling personage than the Empress Queen. At least if he has any notable projects in his head, he has not the mischievous power of putting them into execution. If the heads of all the emperors and kings of the earth, were to ache as mine does at this present moment, what a quiet world should we inhabit! In whatever state my head is, my heart, my dearest friend, must ever be yours most faithfully, &c.

LETTER CCXXXI.

Bath, *January* 15, 1781.

Our next intercourse, my dear friend, I hope will be *de vive voix*: as, if please God we live and prosper, we hope to be in town on Saturday evening.

I rejoice with you on the expulsion of the French from Jersey; on a public account, both its capture and deliverance was particularly interesting to our party, from an acquaintance we have made here with the Lempriere family, who are very agreeable respectable people. They unite

unite the vivacity of the French manners, with the simple good sense of the English. Mr. Lempriere is the first magistrate of Jersey, and he and his lady have large possessions there, which have descended to them unalienated through many centuries. They had a daughter with them here, and one son, a colonel of the brave island militia, a very fine young man, of great spirit and knowledge, joined with a most becoming modesty of behaviour *. Their other son, *aide-de-camp* to the commanding officer, was left at Jersey. They were at Bath when the news of the capture arrived; and received it with a resignation and piety that was very edifying. The next day made them happy in the account of the deliverance. They are now gone to town, and I find, by the papers, that their son is wounded, but I hope not dangerously. The brutality of the French officers, both from public and private accounts, appears to have been shocking. Their dragging about their prisoners to expose them to the fire of the islanders was horribly barbarous. The direction of the ball which passed through Colonel Corbet's hat,

* It should be mentioned that this gentleman set off post for the island the moment the news arrived that it was attacked, though it was retaken before he got there.

and

and left him unhurt, while it killed the French general, is a most remarkable circumstance.

Did you know a Mrs. Kynaston in the Crescent who is lately dead? She has left her house and other considerable legacies to Mrs. Marsham, Lord Romney's sister, an excellent woman, who is likely to make an admirable use of this accession of fortune. Talking of excellent people, I am sure you grieve for the terrible wreck of Mr. Braithwaite's fortune. However I hope it is only a temporary calamity, though, till it can be repaired, a very grievous one to him, and, alas, to many others.

The Bowdler family, and all your friends here, enquire very much after you. Bath, they tell me, is still very crowded, but I know nothing about it; my *train de vie*, is as quiet as if I was living in a village. I cannot forbear giving you the pleasure of knowing, that I yesterday heard your nephew, Mr. Robinson *, most highly spoken of, for his civility and good breeding. We went yesterday to visit you at Mr. Hoane's. All agreed that the picture is extremely like; so to be sure it is, and one ought not to quarrel with the painter, because nothing is you, but yourself. Mr. Hoane wished me to say to you how very

* Now Lord Rokeby, Mr. Montagu's elder brother.

greatly

greatly he thinks himself obliged, by your kind notice of his son. I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c. &c.

LETTER CCXXXII.

Deal, *June* 15, 1781.

At a time when I hoped to have received an account of your enjoying the sweet tranquillity of Sandleford groves, and enjoying a vacation from the bustle and hurry of so many London months, it was a grievous disappointment to me to be informed by your letter this morning, that bad health has driven you to Bath in such a hurry; I rejoice you went at once, and hope the waters will have their usual good effect on you. I am glad you are lodged on the Queen's parade. I am well acquainted with the situation by visiting Miss Jones, whose father has a house there, and it seems to me one of the cleanest and most airy situations in Bath; the dirt of the parades are scandalous and intolerable.

And

And so Mr. Vesey has at length fixed the day of his departure. I believe our dear Sylph has been so long wearied by his uncertainties, that in the comfort of a determination, she loses in some degree her regret of its consequence. Indeed she has, through the whole of this long sickness, conducted herself with the utmost prudence and propriety, and without the least interference given up the affair to his own choice, and the judgment of his physician. He is so marvellously recovered within these few weeks, that there seems no particular danger of his untaking the journey and voyage. Poor man, what an idle and unprofitable use does he make of the short reprieve allowed him from the grasp of death, from which he has so lately escaped! Your description of his septuagesimal gallantry would make one laugh, if it was possible to confine one's thoughts from looking to the consequences. But it is in reality a very melancholy object to see people when then they can no longer dance to the fiddle of folly, still hobble after it, out of time, and out of tune, till they stumble into the grave. Long acquaintance, and the constant civility which I have experienced from Mr. Vesey, have sufficiently interested me for him to give me many an uncomfortable re-

flection on the strange insensibility with which he seems to neglect every serious consideration.

Mrs. Pennington is with me, she is recovering slowly from two sharp attacks of Tunstal ague, but is still so weak she cannot employ herself in any way; a most mortifying circumstance to any one of this family, which is troubled with such a perpetual restless spirit of *doing*. It is well they content themselves with their own business, or, being pretty numerous, they might stir up much turbulence among the more quiet part of his Majesty's subjects. To prevent any ill consequences from the present impediment, I have found out a most innocent employment for her, and she is in a great part of each morning, occupied in shelling peas.

I had the pleasure last night of seeing a few lines which a friend was so good as to send me, writ in dear Lady Charlotte Finch's own hand, the first she has been able to write since she left England. Both her Ladyship and Lord Winchelsea are much better, but I see she is still apprehensive for the excessive shake which his constitution has received by his illness. They are now at some distance from Lisbon, in a course of mineral waters. Their journey thither was ordered by the Queen of Portugal in a manner

manner truly royal. This is pleasant for the [illegible] of one's friends; and it is pleasant likewise as a proof of the good disposition which I find upon every occasion, the Portuguese discover towards the English nation. Mrs. Fielding was soon to go to court, (she is the only one of the [illegible]able) to thank the Queen; she is to go in an English dress, which it seems is thought a compliment. Is it not an odd etiquette that single ladies are not admissible there?

We are very quiet, I thank God, on this coast, from any present alarms from foreign enemies, but we have all been very much discomposed by a highway robbery, not two miles from the town; an event so unusual, that I believe the oldest inhabitant never met with a single instance of it before. A soldier, a marine, and two sailors, all quartered at Deal, robbed two passengers, and the driver of the postchaise. They were all taken in a few hours, and sent to jail, from whence they will probably, poor wicked wretches, be removed to the gallows or the *justitia*, as the proofs against them are as clear as possible.

We have a Russian man-of-war in the Downs. It seems they refused to salute the admiral, unless he would return an equal number of guns, which as the Russian commander is only a commodore,

is not the etiquette, so no salute has passed on either side, which is a very unusual thing, I heard from a captain just returned from a cruize of observation off the coast of Holland, that the Dutch have only ten ships of the line, and they are neither manned, nor stored in a proper manner. Adieu, my dear friend, I hope your next letter will inform me, that the Bath waters possess the powers of healing, in much greater perfection than the whole college of physicians.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

Langton, *July* 31, 1781.

Indeed, my dear friend, I quite enjoy your excursions in your whisky, and cannot agree with you in calling an exercise so necessary for your health by the name of idleness. It is the people who fancy themselves very busy, who are running from one crowded room to another, or wasting life in graver follies of wild ambition, or dishonest gain, who are truly idle; not those who, by an innocent relaxation for one part of the day, endeavour to provide themselves with health

health to enable them to perform with comfort [illegible], the duties of the other.

I rejoice in every circumstance that does honor to the King, whom I always believed to be wiser and honester than his ministers in general, and certainly than the present, who seem to have taken a very extraordinary part in this late affair. I hope the Prince of Wales has the merit of preventing any further bustle!

Whatever time you begin your journey into the North, I hope you will not delay your return till the damps and fogs of autumn. It is not, I know, either pleasant or fashionable to come so early in the year to London; but your airy situation in Portman Square will secure you from stifling, and, as for fashion, whatever you do, must be right. I am quite glad you intend to visit the dear Smelts, in your Northern journey. It is delightful to know that there are such excellent people in the world, and still more delightful to be intimately connected with them.

I should have thought that there could be no subject of amusement to you from my travels through a tract which you have so often passed, though it was all new to me; but as I have not a greater delight, than in endeavouring to amuse you, I will write exactly what struck me, as you desire. For about an hundred and fifty miles,

our

our way lay through the very best roads, and the very dullest country I had ever seen. Yet in some degree, to compensate the barrenness of some parts of the land, and the wretched cultivation of others, we found most of the towns well built, and the churches in general very handsome, in all the villages. In some the architecture of the spires exquisitely beautiful. It is with pleasure I mention to you, who are a native of Yorkshire, (as much as I wish you had been a native of Kent) the wonderful improvement of our prospects as soon as we entered that county. From Ferry-Bridge to Tadcaster, the landscapes are charming, and the country so well cultivated, that there is no describing the relief we found after so many miles of wretched dullness. In going through Huntingdonshire, I could not help thinking, there was as much truth as malice in the description which the Duchess of Manchester gave of it*. We spent Sunday at York, it was a day of rest, I went to see the Minster with which I was delighted, on Monday we slept at Northallerton, and on Tuesday got to Mrs. Vane's.

As Mrs. Vane took the resolution of quitting a world where she was too much sought and

* Her Grace used to say, as it is reported, that grass every where was green, but that in Huntingdonshire it was blue.

admired,

admired, to enjoy that leisure which she felt necessary to her happiness, I was rejoiced to find her placed in a sweet, elegant retirement, which seems quite adapted to the turn of her mind. All the improvements have been formed by herself, the plantations are already in great forwardness; and in a year or two, will furnish a complete shade, an advantage not very common in what we saw of the Bishoprick of Durham. She has stopped a delightful stream in its descent from the mountains towards the Tees, and has limited its wanderings to the bottom of her own garden.

Though the constant calm cheerfulness of Mrs. Vane's spirits, and her variety of employments, render her less dependent on the aid of others, than most people I ever knew, yet I cannot help being pleased to find her placed within a few steps of Lord Darlington's Park, and within a mile of Raby Castle. Her constant connection, and strong attachment to Mr. Vane's relations, and their very affectionate regard to her, give her all the society she wishes; and they spend so great a part of their time in the country, that she is not often left alone. I am very glad to have had an opportunity of conversing with her so many days together; which I hope is a sign of some grace, for her piety and virtue are

of

of so sublime a style, that I always feel little and humbled whenever I am with her.

After spending a week with Mrs. Vane she should have felt awkward, in entering into common every day life, but happily this, like her's, is the abode of exalted understanding and virtue. I am glad to give you the pleasure of knowing that Mr. Smelt seems perfectly to have recovered the tormenting pain in his face, and that Mrs. Smelt looks much better, and breathes much more freely than when she left London. Our journey hitherto has, I thank God, been very prosperous, and the mornings have been cloudy enough to keep us from any inconvenience from heat. The difference of climate, if I may so express myself, appeared very striking in the length of the day light, it has never been dark before ten o'clock. Adieu, my dear friend, let me hear from you very soon.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

Deal, *September* 20, 1781.

On my arrival at this place yesterday evening, I had the pleasure of receiving your very kind letter. I ought certainly to have refreshed your memory by an account of the *sejour* we were to make at Staindrop, Langton, and Howsham; but, to the best of my recollection, I told you the whole scheme in your dressing room as soon as it was fixed. Our first plan was only to see places, and change the air; had I known how long we were to have been absent, I never should have had the courage to undertake the journey. With my miserable health, the fear of being laid up, and giving trouble, renders any thing of this kind quite formidable. However I am very thankful that, though I have suffered most cruelly for the last six or seven weeks, I have always been able to continue my journey, and the loss was all my own, for I was not able to enjoy any of the excursions which were planned for our amusement; but I hope,

hope, now I have got home, to return to my usual state, which is absolute health, compared to what I have suffered.

On our way home we dined with an acquaintance of Miss Sharpe's * at Pomfret. Do pray pity me, who you know have such a curiosity for any monument of the "days of other times," that I was not able to see a castle belonging to John of Gaunt, which makes a most stupendous appearance as it is seen from the road, and is still habitable, though going very fast to ruin. The fatal prison of unhappy Richard is almost entirely mouldered away. It stands, or rather stood, at about half a mile's distance from the palace of his uncle. But most probably you are better acquainted with all this, than I am, as I think you cannot so often have past this road, without taking that view of these vestiges of our old English magnificence, and old English ferocity, which it was, alas, not in my power to do.

Indeed, my dear friend, I do rejoice most sincerely in the health and pleasure which you derive from your one-horse chaise. This vehicle, both from air and prospects, approaches the nearest to the advantages of walking of any

* With whom Mrs. Carter went this journey.

other.

other. But I hope you do not drive yourself, for although this would be a delightful circumstance of independence, I should be mighty sorry, both for your sake and my own, to be a cottage or a church in your way *. However, if you do run against any thing, pray let it be John of Gaunt's Castle, to which, I think, you might very well make an excursion in this machine, perfectly disencumbered from all the appendages of your situation, and with your imagination perfectly at liberty to wander through the gloomy apartments, and converse with the melancholy spectres of the race of York and Lancaster. Whether one sees John of Gaunt's Castle or not, surely every thinking mind on recollecting the history, must feel the utmost gratitude for the blessing of living in times of order and settled government, and should start with horror at every transaction which has the least tendency to bring back the miseries of civil war.

Is it true that Lord George Gordon is tormenting the King with his wild schemes? Indeed it is not strange that a madman should act madly; but that there should ever be found fools to aid and

* On account of Mrs. Montagu's being so extremely near-sighted.

abet

abet him is much more strange: that knaves should do it is no wonder.

You ask me what I hear of the combined fleet, and I will ask you, whether there really is any such thing as a combined fleet existing, at least in the Channel? Long experience has rendered me so sceptical on all political reports that I believe scarcely any thing of that kind. The newspapers seem to have taken up Admiral Parker, as a successor to Keppel. In conversation he is differently represented, but how justly I know not. The people of this place, have had a miserable spectacle in the poor maimed and wounded men, who were sent after the engagement to the hospital here. It seems as if all the nations of the earth were to be punished at present, in a remarkable manner, for their wicked quarrels. They meet, they fight, each side is beaten, and they part without any thing like victory or decision on either side.

Both my reason and my feelings perfectly assent to what you say on the subject of hunting. That men are so unfortunate as not to have been taught, or not to have found out, any better method of employing their time and their activity, should be fond of it, is not very surprizing; but that it should afford so high a degree of pleasure

to

to many men of refined and elegant taste, is most [illegible]countable *.

I have lately seen several letters from Lady Charlotte Finch; Lord Winchelsea recovers so very slowly, that it is not thought safe for her to leave him. What must her tenderness have suffered from his danger, and the alarm of knowing Mrs. Fielding was taken in her way home by an American privateer, without being at the same time acquainted with the humanity with which she was treated. Poor soul, the fatigue she underwent after being set at liberty, in travelling back to the Caldas, through a country of such wretched roads, and such wretched accommodations! There is no change of horses or mules, the same pair goes the whole journey, and in some places the roads are so bad they can only be past in a litter. But, thank God, she arrived there safe, and found her friends much improved in their health, during her unpleasant absence.

I shall be most happy to converse with you in that delightful room, to which you are so good as

* Speculatively, it is so, no doubt, and Mrs. Carter could have no practical knowledge on that subject. But she, and her friend, might have supposed that, in an amusement which has been the delight of every age and of every country, there must be something very engaging and attractive.

to

to invite me; I hope next summer will give me an opportunity of enjoying it with you. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXXXV.

Bath, *December* 17, 1781.

Your patience is quite exemplary, my dear friend. This happy return of dry air and bright sunshine, will probably end its trial, and enable you to take possession of your palace, without the hazard of being interrupted in your enjoyment of it by a cold.

I join with you in lamenting the state of our public affairs; but if our late overthrow and disgrace should be a means of effecting a peace, I would lament them no longer. It has ever appeared to me, in the course of this most unhappy contest, that whether we were sunk by a determined defeat, or foolishly elated by a fallacious something called a victory, all but peace is equally ruin. Every one whom I have happened to hear mention the late miserable event, speaks with dejection

jection and horror of that article of the capitulation which agrees to the exclusion of the wretched Americans who had joined us, from the benefit of the treaty, and thus gives them up to the vengeance of their exasperated countrymen. Is there such an article? Can there be such an article? I would not judge too severely of our unfortunate commanders. Yet surely, my dear friend, one of the first duties of a man who undertakes the profession of a soldier, is to learn to *die*. If that lesson was properly studied, there would be no disgraceful compositions, no violation of good faith, nor treacherous desertion and surrender of those, who are, by all laws of gratitude and humanity, intitled to protection. Is this nation so lost to all sense of virtue and honor, that such a capitulation, as so basely betrays its friends, will pass without a public censure? Do, pray, tell me what you think of all this, and whether I am wrong in the horror and indignation which I feel on this occasion.

At the last concert, an elegy was performed to the memory of Lady Miller*. After having all her life been basely ridiculed for her vanity, by

* Lady of Sir John Riggs Miller of Bath Easton. Her vase, the receptacle of fugitive poetry, is well known; and perhaps the manner in which it was administered, is more to be blamed, than the institution itself.

those

those who helped to support it, she is now universally regretted, and her character treated with the utmost respect. It has one noble testimony, in the lamentations of the poor and the distressed. "Well to be sure (as my niece * lately observed to me on some occasion) this is an odd world by one thing or another." She is much honored by your remembrance, and begs to present her best respects.

I am glad to find Miss Morgan is likely to be so advantageously established, both on her account, and on Mrs. Dunbar's, to whom I am sure it will be a great comfort. She is an amiable, good girl, and, I believe, strictly complied with those reasonable restraints, which the prudence and virtue of her aunt judged proper for her. But it is an unpleasant task to be perpetually struggling again the tide of the world, that world which hurries young people into such a toil of amusement, as leaves them neither health nor spirits for the gaiety of it.

Your physician here, Dr. De la Cour, went off yesterday morning. I know not what precise

* Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. H. Carter, and afterwards wife of the Rev. Dr. Palmer, of Yarcombe in Devonshire; an amiable young woman, of great talents, now many years deceased.

idea

idea is annexed to his *going off*, but it is the general expression used to denote that the said Dr. D——— left Bath and drove towards London. This event is matter of great speculation to all the idlers here, and the more, as last week he had a large assembly. Such events as this furnish conversation for a day or two, till some more novel *going off*, (for that seems the order of the day) makes the last be forgot. Your friend, Dr. Manningham, has been ill enough to be confined for a fortnight, but is now better, and I hope there is a chance of his good humoured face being met at all corners very soon. While writing the above sentence, I am informed that Dr. D. has left this place, on retiring from business to live at Kensington. So there's an end of his *going off*, it would be well, if they all had as favorable a termination.

Have you read Mr. Bryant's proof of the authenticity of Rowley's Poems? I have not, so cannot tell what merit there may be in the book, but I am sure there is great merit in the author, who has generously promised the profits of it to Chatterton's mother, a very honest good woman, who has long been pining in neglected poverty, while others have been enriched by the labours of her son. All the relief she has procured, has been from the indefatigable and unsolicited benevo-

lence of the excellent family of the Mores; for which she was extremely grateful, though it was neither adequate to her wants, nor their wishes. We spent a day with them last week, which would have been delightfully pleasant had not poor Miss Hannah * been very unwell; she is better now, and will, in a few days, set out on her visit to Mrs. Garrick's.

I suppose the present important crisis of public affairs engages the mind of all who think, and the conversation of all who talk, in London. At Bath nobody thinks or talks of any such matter. The only political intelligence which I have heard, is that Mr. Gibbon says there is to be a general peace. Whether he means by this that we are all to turn heathens, which he seems to think the *sine qua non* of all peaceable living, I cannot tell.

Your letter, dated Portman-square, is just brought to me, and I hasten to express to you the wishes of my heart, for every happiness to you in your new abode. Long may you enjoy it, and

* When the name of Hannah is joined to that of More, no explanatory note is needful. Every moral, and what is much more, every christian philosopher must know what he owes to that well-principled mind and strong understanding, the whole powers of which have been directed to those best ends, the glory of God and the salvation of man.

may

may God preserve you from every calamity that might prevent your feeling its comforts and conveniences. I wish you too as much enjoyment of its magnificence, as magnificence has to bestow. But magnificence is an idea of form and ceremony. Comforts and conveniences are the every day necessaries of life, and the materials of constant cheerfulness; that sunshine, without which the palace would be a dungeon, and with it the vinegar bottle (as I who live in a vinegar bottle, experience) a pleasant habitation. Let me own, with gratitude to heaven and you, much the pleasanter for what your friendship and generosity has done for its improvement.

I will convey your kind messages to the Bowdler family this evening, as I drink tea with them. Poor Dr. Bowdler has had a melancholy time at Lisbon, in the death of his friend Lord John Clinton. What rendered this event the more melancholy, was the flattering prospect of his recovery from the disorder for which he went to Lisbon, when he was seized with a putrid fever and died in a few days; the Doctor caught it, but is, thank God, doing well. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

Deal, *June* 19, 1782.

By this time I hope, my dear friend, that you have perfectly recovered that little *memento*, that you were once subject to spasmodic disorders. May you never feel any greater degree of complaint, than such as is sufficient to put you on your guard to use every possible means of preventing a return.

The death of poor Mrs. Pulteney has very sensibly affected me indeed. I owed much to her generosity, and more to the kind and friendly manner with which she always treated me. I think you are mistaken in thinking she had so little enjoyment of life. Though her ill health rendered her indolent, it did not destroy her cheerfulness. The benevolence of her heart, and the goodness of her temper, were certainly admirable helps towards happiness; and these she had wonderfully preserved, notwithstanding the many vexatious trials, and disappointments, with which the early part of her life had been so much harassed;

harassed; and I am persuaded if she was not happy, it was not from any natural incapacity for happiness. By all that I hear, she has acted very nobly by Mr. Pulteney; and I am very glad she had it in her power to make so liberal a provision for him. I am informed it was effected entirely without his knowledge, and to his great surprize, as he did not know she had the liberty of making such a disposition in his favour. This is a circumstance much to the honor of his disinterestedness; for probably there are not many husbands who would not have enquired more particularly into such a possibility.

Mrs. Fielding arrived here on Monday, she looks remarkably well, and is very happy in rejoining Lady Charlotte Finch and her two sweet children, the third she brought with her.

As one of the capital comforts of a rural retirement is quiet, it was very hard that, at your first arrival, you should be assailed by sounds more discordant than those you had flown from in London. By the time of your return from Northumberland, I hope all your improvements will be compleated. However you may comfort yourself among all these lesser evils, with the reverse of the old philosopher's triumph, that you are born a woman, and not a man; for if you had been a man, you would have been a politician; and who

with

with either sense or honesty, would not shudder at the possibility of being engaged in such political *tracasseries* as the present! Are not you greatly scandalized at those who are gone out to follow such a leader as Mr. F. Do you ever remember such a demand, as that the first Lord of the Treasury should be named by the cabinet? Is not this an attempt to convert, or pervert, our government into an oligarchy? If these patriots really meant any good to their country, would they immediately have thrown every thing into confusion, and not waited a little to see in what manner Lord Shelburne was likely to proceed? How he will proceed I am sure I cannot tell; but his speech, if properly represented, is reasonable and constitutional, and founded upon principles, to which if he adheres, and is rightly supported, promises to do all that can be done to extricate us from our present difficulties, so far as human means can contribute to it. Perhaps in my choler, for I really do feel more than usually choleric about all this confusion, I may have spoken too severely of those who have quitted their posts. Some of them, it is to be hoped, mean well; but it is grievous, if they do, to see well intentioned people so misled by artifice and faction. God, in his goodness, I trust, will be our protection amidst all this perplexity and discord. One word more and I have

I have done with this subject. What do you think of the *pension* unanimously agreed to by the patriots who have been so long bawling themselves black in the face in praise of œconomy?

> Anna, whose tongue you hear a mile hence,
> Talks half the day in praise of silence!

Do, pray, tell me all you think about these fine doings; and if you can put me into better temper than I feel at present, pray do, for I do not love to feel so cross.

I must not forget to present Lady Charlotte Finch and Mrs. Fielding's compliments to you. I have had several excellent French letters from my nephew Pennington, who is now at Amiens, and, in his last, some very good Italian verses; I am much pleased with the account he gives of all he sees, and he sees all that is worthy of notice in all the places he passes through.

I am at present deep in Costanza's History of Naples, which Lady Charlotte Finch has lent me. It is less entertaining than I expected; but, however, less dull than other Italian prose which I have ever happened to read. All the *dramatis personæ* of an Italian history, are either soldiers or politicians: and all soldiers, and all politicians are too much alike to furnish that variety of interest which arise from those discriminating cir-

cum-

cumstances in which one human creature differs from another*.

Lady M. Coke is expected here to-morrow, and I hope Lady Juliana Penn will shortly be at Walmer Castle. Lord and Lady North are to be there the first week in September, so that there will be quite a knot of nobility in the neighbourhood this autumn. Mr. Fielding is expected in the Downs to-morrow, in his way to join Lord Howe †, if the wind will permit so large a ship to sail in its teeth, and blowing pretty strong.

Sir John Lockhart Ross came into the Downs a few days ago, with fourteen hundred men sick of the influenza, which obliged the fleet to leave the Texel. This disorder has been very prevalent here, and at this present time I can hardly hold up my head with it, so I must say, adieu, my dear friend, for I am so good for nothing, I am not fit to hold converse with you to-day.

* Is not this the case with respect to all general history? In public life of every description, men are so dependent upon those with whom they act, and upon circumstances, that there is very little room for the display of personal character or peculiarities.

† He did join him, and bore a distinguished part in the celebrated relief of Gibraltar.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

Deal, *July* 20, 1782.

God preserve your life and health, my dear friend, and cheerful will your days pass, in a house raised without oppression and wrong; and quiet will be your nights, undisturbed by the voice "of the stone that cries out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber that answers it." Probably the cuckoo and the nightingale may continue their song long enough to greet your arrival at Sandleford. At least I heard them, but a few days ago, they seem to have followed the slow progress of vegetation; it is but a very short time that the trees have been in full leaf. The dog star, it is to be hoped, will drive away all remains of winter and the influenza.

Your apprehensions that the constitution of our government is to be destroyed, I trust are without foundation. If we are not so profligate a people, as I hope we are not, as to be totally abandoned by heaven, there is a force and spirit in our laws and government, that will resist all the wicked efforts, that some few unprincipled wretches

wretches can exert for their destruction. By the blessing of God, on the good sense of the people of England at large, it will not be in the power of a ragamuffin mob to overset this kingdom, whatever powers of oratory may belong to their leader *. Lord Shelburne has acted wisely in securing the uncommon abilities of Mr. Wm. Pitt. Lord North, who cannot be supposed to have been biassed by any partiality to this juvenile prodigy, declared to a person from whom I heard it, that no ministry could withstand his opposition. His moral character is said to be unblemished, and his principles religious; and his duty and attention to Lord Chatham, give a very favorable impression of his natural disposition.

Lord Rockingham's death has probably been hastened by the fatigues of business, to which his health was not equal. How far this event may affect the public system I know not, but I grieve for the private distress of his family, particularly for Lady Charlotte Wentworth, whose gentle and affectionate heart deeply feels this blow. I had a letter from her yesterday, in which she gives me a very amiable and affecting picture of Lord Rock-

* It is curious to observe the effects produced on the minds of private individuals, by the disturbances of those days; and to compare them with similar events passing before our own eyes.

ingham's

ingham's private and domestic character. I heard one strong proof of it from Lady Mary Coke, that Lord Fitzwilliam was so very much affected at his death, that he twice fainted away. She mentions that both he and Lady Fitzwilliam were in so much grief, that she was obliged to suspend her own emotions on their account. By the old Lord Rockingham's will, fifteen thousand pounds comes to each of the late Lord's sisters.

By a letter from dear Lady Dartrey, I was concerned to hear of the death of Miss E. Burrows; I did not before know she had been ill. A second wound before the first was closed, must be most grievously felt by a family of so much union and love, and indeed my heart quite aches for them. The people of the world soon hurry away their griefs in dissipation and amusement. But those of better principles, who place all their happiness in domestic and friendly connexions, must long retain the mournful impression.

Our little prince * is very well in health, and the eruption is much mended since his bathing in the sea. So Lady Charlotte Finch has nothing to hinder her perfect enjoyment of Mrs. Fielding and her family. Lady Juliana Penn is expected

* Prince Octavius, who was sent to Deal Castle for sea-bathing.

at

at Walmer Castle; so you see we are very illustrious on this coast just now.

I am myself much pleased with Mrs. Iremonger's marriage; he is a most amiable character, and I hope she will enjoy more comfort and happiness than she formerly did, as Mr. Dunbar's bad health, and worse spirits, made her affectionate heart, at times, quite miserable. I am rejoiced she is to spend her winter in London. I hear of a great number of matches that are speedily to take place in town. Marriage seems to be as general this year as the influenza. I hope as you and I have escaped the one, we shall not be carried off by the other. Good lack a day! What a *tapage* such an event would make in the world! I hope you will find Sandleford ready to receive you at your return from the North, in all the smiles of sweet autumnal quiet, free from the grating of saws and the thundering of hammers. My dearest friend,

I am ever yours, &c.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

Deal, *September* 21, 1782.

By this time, I hope, my dear friend, that your heart is quite at ease about Gibraltar. I long remember to have heard wise people say, that this place is of no use to us. However this may be in general, at present it is certainly of great importance; for while the Spaniards are breaking their teeth against this impenetrable rock, it prevents their attacking us, where their assaults might do us much greater mischief. Their expence in this scheme is almost incredible. I am told that every week of the siege costs them forty thousand pounds. Are you acquainted with that gallant water-drinking hero, General Elliot?

I am sorry to hear of the loss of your buildings by the lightning; but I am also glad with you, that it did not demolish the living tabernacle, which you could not have repaired. We have had no thunder here; but some days ago, a most violent tempest of wind and rain, which made me suffer terribly for three days before it happened. The moment the storm began, I felt myself relieved

lieved as if of a terrible burden. A most miserable poor *jouet* of all the elements is my unfortunate constitution.

I give you all possible credit for the great fortitude you shewed in resisting the temptation of two days alluring sunshine, which might have carried many a giddy traveller towards the North pole who did not look forward to the scowl of November at their return. I think you were much wiser in enjoying it in your own beautiful domain at Sandleford, and am well pleased to hear Miss Gregory is so good a charioteer.

Mr. and Miss Pulteney * are at Ramsgate; they have been over to see me three different times; poor man, he is sadly distressed to know what to do with his daughter. She has, I believe, a very sweet disposition, and a very good understanding, but is miserably uneducated; her dear mother's ill health did not allow her to exert that authority which is necessary to fix a child to proper application; and her fondness for her would not suffer her to delegate that authority to ano-

* Afterwards Countess of Bath; a mournful instance of the incompetency of wealth to secure happiness, or even comfort, to its possessor, though attended by every kind and good disposition. She always shewed the most affectionate and grateful regard to Mrs. Carter, and encreased the annuity which her father had settled on her of 100*l.* a year, to 150*l.*

ther;

ther; so that, by a long habit of idleness, she is become totally incapable of application, except by such a strictness and regularity of discipline as cannot, at her age, be exercised by a governess. The poor thing is very sensible of her misfortune, and very desirous of having it corrected, but finds herself incapable of effecting it, by any resolution of her own, but is anxious for something, or somebody, who would oblige her to submit herself to that application without which nothing is to be learnt. She has the utmost duty, and unbounded affection and confidence, in her father; to him, and him only, as to a confidential friend, she says what she thinks; most sincerely do I hope this trait may continue, as it will be a means of securing her against the many dangers to which, in her situation, she might be liable from selfish and designing people. My affection and gratitude to her parents, makes me particularly anxious about her, for there is very much to be done for her before she can be introduced into society with any degree of propriety. God grant that some means may be found to fit her properly for that great part which she is to act in the world. It would be very grievous, that many good, and some great, qualities should run all to waste, when she will hereafter be in a situation, which might render them so very distinguished a blessing to herself,

herself, and to society if they are properly cultivated. The child herself has suggested a plan, which seems to bid the fairest, in her particular circumstances, for her improvement. But probably I may not be able to give you an account of this before we meet.

I have not seen Miss Burney's Cecilia. It has not yet travelled to our circulating library. Did you ever read Ulloa's History of the Emperor Charles V. I have just finished it; it is naturally and sensibly written, but with the partiality of a cotemporary historian, whose family had been in the service of his hero. His account of the Indian affairs seems the best part of his book. I have been trying to read a French history of Scanderbeg *; but, besides the abomination of its being a heavy quarto, the story is so very dull, and the style so affected, that my patience extended very little farther, than reading the contents of the chapters and the margin.

I had a letter from our dear Sylph by the same post with yours; in it, she complains that her head and eyes are both gone; but I see no proof of any deficiency in either by her letter. Mr. Vesey

* Paris, 1621. The Editor, in his early days, used to consider himself as a very intrepid reader; but he was never able to wade through that book.

does

does not think of setting out for England till next moon. I do not at all like this delay. My nephew Pennington *, who is at Bruges, writes me an account of the ceremony of the triumphal entry of the "Premier Etudiant" of Louvain, as an affair of an astonishing *eclat*. The young man is a native of Bruges, and the honors paid him are beyond any public reward of learning I ever heard of except the Olympic games.

For all you, I hold our politicians to be very good rats; for rats, I believe, never quit a falling house, as long as there remains any eatable thing in the cupboard. Adieu, my dear friend.

* The Editor's elder brother, who, as was mentioned before, was then travelling on the Continent. See an account of this circumstance, together with a great many other curious and interesting particulars, and many "observations upon the dispositions of the French previous to the Revolution," in Pennington's "Continental Excursions." 2 vols. 8vo. Rivingtons. 1809.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

Deal, *October* 5, 1782.

It is happy, my dear friend, that the rainy summer has not universally produced such bad consequences every where, as in Northumberland. Never was known a more plentiful crop, nor a more prosperous harvest than in this county. Our farmers say that, though the summer was so rainy, there was a dryness in the air which when ever it held up, counteracted the effects of the wet.

It is indeed a wonder that the princes of the earth, should ever deprive their subjects of the blessings of peace. I have lately heard of a remarkable anecdote which seemed well authenticated. The Spaniards, about three years since, were in actual treaty with our government for the surrender of Gibraltar on terms very advantageous for us; they were to give us Porto Rico, a million of money, and ten men of war. In the midst of the negociations Lord George Gordon's riots happened. The French dispatched a mes-

senger to Madrid, to desire them to stop proceedings, for there was a *soulevement en Angleterre,* that would completely overset the government; and so the treaty was snapt short. Humanly speaking, there does not seem at present any reasons for apprehensions about Gibraltar. The infatuation of the Spaniards appears astonishing, but it seems the derangement of their monarch turns upon this point. So, "*Quicquid delirant Reges,*" &c. happens to be literally true in this case.

I have not heard any thing lately of the poor suffering family of the Burrows's; but as Lady Dartrey in two letters which I have lately had from her does not name them, probably the child is recovered. I know not where Mrs. Chapone is, as I have not heard from her since a very little after the death of Mrs. Burrows. Did I mention to you her having left Mrs. Chapone an annuity of ten pounds a year? This, considering the numerous claims of her own family, was a kind legacy.

I have not read the confessions of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Nor, by your account of them, ever will. Indeed I soon found his writings to be of so bad a tendency, that, after a few trials, I had determined never to look into any thing he should publish. He always appeared to me a bad man.

That he was mad I never doubted. Whether it was from a pitiable infirmity of body, or a wilful depravation of mind, he alone can perfectly tell, who will be his unerring Judge. Human rules of judging are against him. Whoever, by a spirit of outrageous pride, strives to pass those limits, which it has pleased God to set to our mortal understanding; who expects that every thing is to give way to his reason; and who rejects all authority, human and divine, unless he is able to account for every thing by his own faculties, will soon reduce his mind to a state of confusion, error, and extravagance; and, in the awful and tremendous phrase of scripture, he will be "struck with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart." God keep you and me, my dear friend, in the sobriety and humility of the Gospel, and preserve us from every tendency to that pride and vanity, which leads to such a dreadful subversion and extinction of all intellectual and moral light *!

Mr. and Miss Pulteney were with me yesterday. He is going, by her own desire, to place her

* It is to be hoped that this is, at length, the light in which Rousseau begins to be seen by the world. If he was to be tried by "the words of truth and soberness," such as the great champion of revelation appealed to in proof that he was "not mad," the result would probably be very different.

in

in a convent at Paris, where the young people of the highest rank in France, and many English, are educated. They both desired me to accompany her to Paris. The proposal, you will guess, was not a pleasant one, in my state of health. But I could not be so selfish as to refuse this instance of attention to a poor child deprived of a mother, who was my kind and generous friend. So I consented without hesitation. We are to go in about a week, and I am to return with Mr. Pulteney before the end of this month. Unless you write immediately I shall not have the pleasure of hearing from you before I go; but do not hurry yourself; only let me be welcomed by finding a letter from you at my return. I am tempted to undertake this journey, because I hope this scheme will be beneficial to Miss Pulteney, and, it appears to me, that it is, perhaps, the only one, in her situation, that would do.

I am, my dear friend.

LETTER CCXL.

Paris, *October* 23, 1782.

As I have an opportunity of sending a letter by a courier, I cannot, my dear friend, deny myself the pleasure of writing to you, though the miserable state of my head will not allow me to say much.

You are too well acquainted with Paris for me to attempt any description; and indeed I have seen little more than could be discovered by driving every day through the streets, as Miss Pulteney has many commissions to execute for her friends in England. The impression which I receive from a general view of Paris is, that though the houses have a much more magnificent appearance than ours, the wretched narrowness of the streets, renders it upon the whole much inferior to our own metropolis. London is accommodated to the convenience and comfort of all its inhabitants; Paris is made only for the rich, the powerful, and the great.

As I did not come hither to disport myself, I have

have seen but little. I cannot help mentioning to you, however, how extremely I was struck with the tomb of Richelieu. I mean with the sculpture; for perhaps the architecture may be liable to some criticism. In passing through Chaillot in our way to the Bois de Boulogne, I looked earnestly for your house, but could not see any thing that appeared like a *sejour* for you *.

We are lodged in a magnificent hotel, in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, very near the Pont Neuf; and in spite of all I had ever heard of the dirtiness of Paris, the rooms are kept perfectly clean, *et je ne trouve ni puce, ni punaize.*

Miss Pulteney is to be placed in the Abbaye Royal de Parthemont. The convent has a great character, as a place of education, and I hope the poor child will receive all the advantages from it which she needs, and obtain a proper improvement of that remarkable quickness, good sense, and amiable disposition, which have all been running miserably to waste, for want of that proper discipline, so difficult to be exerted by the parents of a beloved and only child.

The abbess of Parthemont is a lady of very

* The beauty of Mrs. Montagu's house at Chaillot, was not in the front, but in the back rooms and garden, which commanded a very beautiful view over part of Paris and the valley of the Seine.

high

high rank. She is pretty far advanced in years, but lively, cheerful, and perfectly easy in her manners. There are two kinds of pensioners; one of a higher price and under less restraint than the other; though Mr. Pulteney pays the price of the first, the good sense of Miss Pulteney made her desire to be placed in the second, where she will be kept to a stricter discipline. This class wears a uniform, for the morning, stuff; the afternoon, silk. It was appointed by the late Dauphin, who had intended to apply to the king for the badge of an order which the pensioners would have been entitled to wear for their lives. His death prevented the institution of this honorable distinction.

I hope we shall leave Paris on Friday or Saturday at the farthest. Miss P.'s dress will be ready for her to go into the convent to-morrow. I don't think the air of Paris agrees with me at all. The journey will, I hope, restore me to my usual state; but I dread the effects of the voyage, I suffer so much. I hope you received a dab of a letter which I sent from Calais, when I was more dead than alive.

LETTER CCXLI.

Deal, *November* 26, 1782.

Welcome, my dear friend, to your winter quarters, where I hope you will preserve all that health which, God be thanked, you bring with you. I never think of your house in Portman-square, as other folks think, and talk about it; as a magnificent house, and a fine house, and an elegant house, though all this is very true, but as a house containing a great quantity of air, which, I trust, will, by the blessing of God, be a means of preserving your health, and lengthening a life of such distinguished value. To have completed such an undertaking as your northern expedition, without any one unprosperous circumstance, is indeed a great blessing, and the manner in which you enjoy it, stamps the highest value on that and every other advantage. To consider whatever instances of happiness which fall to our lot, as proceeding from the greatest and best of Beings, and to feel our hearts expand with gratitude, and our hopes repose with confi-

dence

dence on his paternal care, excites such sentiments as those, who never look beyond second causes, can never conceive.

I rejoice that you found the respectable and amiable family at Howsham * in such comfortable health; I was under some apprehensions that the charms of their society would have tempted you to stay there till the weather changed; but you prudently withstood temptation.

Your letter on the subject of convent education was so very excellent, and moreover shewed so kind a concern for Miss Pulteney, that I believe you would not disapprove my letting Mr. Pulteney have a sight of it. I enclose you his answer, which it would be unjust to him to suppress: "I perfectly agree with your general opinion; but the particular circumstances of this poor child left no other resources. Whatever little she may acquire from the education of a convent in other respects, and which probably will be little enough, if the kind of discipline will habituate her to contradiction and subduing her own humour, which has hitherto been ruined by unlimited indulgence, the principle intention of sending her there will be answered."

As to the story of the engagement it is this:

* In Yorkshire, Mr. Cholmley's.

When

When we were at Calais last week, I called on an acquaintance, who is settled there, and she told me the mayor of Calais had received a letter, with an account of an engagement, where the English had fought *comme des diables*, that the French had lost six ships but had gained the victory. What credit is to be given to this account time will shew.

You rejoice me by mentioning the expectation of the arrival of our dear Sylph, but I will not depend upon it till they are actually arrived. With all her gentleness, our dear Sylph has as much courage as any hero, where her heart is as deeply engaged, as on her return to London, and I fear her giving up to a stopping at Dublin, though only for a nominal time, is a proof that her spirits are, as she says, giving way, and not as good as usual.

I have not seen Dr. Price's Letter to the Volunteers, but, by your account, I, not being so *gentle* as the said Doctor, should feel my spirits stirred to great indignation. It is heartily to be wished, that all these aiders and abettors of anarchy and confusion, would migrate into some desert, where they might without controul enjoy that *natural* liberty of which they are so fond, and leave sober quiet people to the legal restraints of civil society. If I had any spirit of revenge against

against the thirteen stripes, instead of sending these independent gentlemen into a forest, I would wish them among their friends in America. Have you read Lord George Gordon's two-penny Letters? The gentle Doctor and the curious Lord agree pretty well, in the article of stirring up confusion, but seem strongly different in their notions of the volunteers, whom Lord George, in his wisdom, seems to consider as partizans of the King. May God in his goodness counteract the mischiefs by which we are threatened from the folly or wickedness of man!

Did not you like the King's Speech, and were you not scandalized at the insolence with which it was treated? I am sorry to find there is a talk of exchanging Gibraltar. Whatever doubt might be made of its utility before, it has been sufficiently evident in the present war, during which it has been, in the hand of heaven, an instrument of our preservation, by employing so great a part of the forces of our enemies *a pure perti.*

One would think by the joy which you say Mr. C—— discovers at the marriage of his daughter, that he imagined any connection with a ducal coronet, contained all the virtues of the grand elixir. Whatever metaphysical emolument it may confer, in the present case, it is well

well if the poor girl does not find a deficiency of the vulgar advantages, of meat, drink, washing, and lodging. Her wretched composition of paint, &c. which you so well describe, would be still more censurable, if there was not too much reason to ascribe it to the folly of her parents. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXLII.

Deal, *June* 21, 1783.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear friend, for your kind recommendation of the care of my health. I have certainly for the last month been a great sufferer, I am now much better, nor do I despair of its being in a better state than it has been for some time past, yet at my age, much improvement is not reasonably to be expected, and it will be wiser for me, instead of indulging visionary hopes of its becoming much better, to fix my thoughts with due thankfulness on the blessing that it is no worse. Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may exert my endeavours

for

for what can be acquired, instead of wasting them on what cannot. All my care and application can never make me healthy; but, with the Divine assistance, they may make me good. God does not work miracles for the indulgence of our wishes in this world; but his aid is always ready to give efficacy to our endeavours after happiness in a better.

I am still very low and spiritless, but hope to get about the world again in a few days. My poor little garden droops for the assistance of its mistress, one of whose great delights it is; and all my goods and chattels are in a litter and confusion very grievous to the orderly spirit of an ancient maiden gentlewoman. My dear sister Pennington came over to see me last week, and would insist upon my going back with her to Eastrey, and I really think the change of air did me good, though it was very wet while I was there, we contrived to get into a pretty little garden they have, and regale ourselves with the fragrance of the sweet briar, and the song of the black bird; they have a very convenient, pleasant house, in a very healthy situation. I went for two days and staid five, for I am always happy with them, my sister is so kind a nurse, and knows my ways so well, and I really think myself much mended by the change.

We

We are, as you may suppose, all very much distressed for my poor brother's sad loss*. His neighbours behaved with the greatest kindness, took in the poor children, and prevented their house from being plundered. Thank God, he expresses himself with the resignation of a Christian, and is grateful to the Almighty for the preservation of his children, and the rest of his property; he returned public thanks the Sunday after. It is the duty of those of his family, who are able, to contribute what they can towards alleviating his loss. I am heartily thankful to God for what he has put in my power; and I feel particularly on this, as well as many other occasions, my obligations to your kind and generous friendship, which enables me to be of some assistance to a brother who so well deserves it. This misfortune prevented my brother from accompanying his son† who came here to be equipped for sea. Poor thing he gave me many a heart-ach, but he is a fine spirited little boy, and never shewed the least symptom of reluctance or

* By a fire which destroyed the barn and stables of her younger brother, the Rev. H. Carter, at his Rectory of Little Wittenham, Berks.

† His second son Charles, who soon became a brave and good officer, and is now, as well as his elder brother Benjamin, an old Post Captain in the Royal Navy.

fear

fear, though he had never been before two miles from the village where he was born.

Mrs. Underdown is very much obliged by your kind remembrance, she is just now laid up with a bad fit of the gout in her paralytic side, with which she is not best pleased, though it is thought it may be of some service to her; but poor soul, with all her good humour, she is on this occasion impatient, and, that she may be as little troublesome as possible, desires her maids not to come near her, but when she rings her bell, that she may have the comfort of *roaring* without interruption.

Our dear Sylph has not imparted to me the secret of her coming to Margate, with which, I have reason to believe, she means to surprize me, and I will not disappoint her, by discovering I know any thing of the matter; though I fear the distance will prevent my seeing her so often as we both shall wish. However, as I am willing to consider this expedition as an earnest of her not going to Ireland, I heartily rejoice in it. Lord North's family is not in this neighbourhood; but I made enquiries for you, about Mr. F. North's health from Lady Holdernesse, and she says he is very much better.

What do you think of the whip-cords? Do not you wish they were formed into a cat of nine tails,

tails, and his Lordship flogged in due manner with the same? I agree most perfectly with you in the useful lesson of learning to grow old. But indeed I think our friend has shown more disposition to it the last winter than ever. She has gone out but little, and I have passed many quiet, comfortable evenings with her, and only one or two or more. I grieve to think she is often in so fluctuating a state. Adieu, neither *head* nor paper will hold out longer.

LETTER CCXLIII.

Deal, *August* 28, 1783.

Many thanks to you, my dear friend, for giving me the pleasure of knowing you were safe arrived at the end of your long journey. Before this I hope you have received mine, with an account of our friends. I heard from Mrs. Vesey to-day, and I cannot help hoping there is no chance of her going to Ireland this year; she usually, you know, writes in a despairing strain,

but I observe with great pleasure, that she now talks of spending the winter in Clarges-street, with very little scruple or hesitation; I find she has made a great acquaintance with Lady Mary Coke, who has been at Margate.

I heartily congratulate you on the prosperous state of your affairs in the North. God grant you health and long life to enjoy this and all his other blessings, in a manner to render yourself and many others happy.

I did see Studley when I was in Yorkshire. South Lodge* and Studley are the only two places I ever saw that struck me with the idea of originality. At South Lodge every step is through a forest, and at Studley one never loses the impression of a desert. I fancied I heard the poor sequestered houseless monks, chanting their "saintly orisons" beneath the wild shelter of spreading trees, their only retreat from the scorching sun, and wintry snows, till their piety and their distresses excited the liberal contributions that raised the noble structure of Fountains' Abbey †. Did you ever visit Rippon Minster?

I could

* Then the seat of Miss Sharpe, and completely embosomed in the forest of Enfield Chace, to which all the scenery of the grounds bore the most marked analogy.

† It may be hoped that the piety which distinguished the earl

I could not discover when I was there any memorials of Wilfred, who was often obliged to take shelter there, from the storms which his turbulent spirit was so apt to raise amongst the princes, and the clergy of his time.

I am better qualified at this time to talk on the antiquities of the Heptarchy, than the politics of modern days, of which I know nothing but from the newspapers, and these I do not deem the most authentic authorities. All my friends are out of town. I see poor Lord Ashburton is dead. Alas! why did he not die Mr. Dunning, and not Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster! Before this period he was a great man. One has seen instances of his fairness and candour,

early Monks upon this celebrated foundation, was not wholly lost sight of by their successors. No fault was alledged against them at the dissolution, but that the Abbot had taken some jewels belonging to the monastery into his custody. And when old Henry Jenkins, who died in 1670, and remembered the dissolution of Fountains' Abbey, was asked concerning the conduct of the Monks, he could recollect nothing about it, but their hospitality and charity to the poor. Mrs. Carter's allusion above, is to the historical fact of thirteen Monks, from the Abbey of St. Mary, in York, who used to meet for the purpose of prayers and austerity, under an elm upon this spot. Archbishop Thurston heard of it, and founded an abbey for them in the same place.

with regard to those who differed from him in political principles, that were truly noble.

I hope Mr. and Mrs. Smelt will find all possible improvement to their health that the sea-air, and the company and society of their friends can bestow.

I am much obliged to you for your kind offer, but I have no occasion for any part of the money which I am so well pleased should continue in your hands. All that I can do for my brother Henry must be out of my income; what little property I have must not be touched without the most absolute necessity. I hope I am not extravagant; and with tolerable economy one may and ought always to make some reserve for particular exigencies. In addition to this loss, my poor brother has had a much heavier stroke in the sudden death of his good and kind friend Dr. Wheeler *, who on this sad event had been to see him, and had promised him every assistance in his power. On returning home he was seized with a fit, and died instantly. But these are inflictions from the hand of God, to which we ought to submit with resignation, and trust to the infinite resources of his Providence to repair our

* The very respectable and learned divinity professor in the neighbouring University of Oxford.

losses

losses in whatever way he judges proper. It is a great consolation to reflect, that such a friend was taken from the world by so sudden a stroke, just while his heart was glowing with every humane and benevolent purpose.

We have had a most dreadful transaction in this neighbourhood within these few days. A poor young woman going from hence to Sandwich, was robbed by a sailor, and thrown into a ditch, from whence she was taken out dead in a very short time after. The utmost zeal and diligence were exerted to find the murderer, which have succeeded. He was taken at Dover, and brought before my brother *, who, after a long examination, committed him on Tuesday night to prison. A boy of thirteen saw the whole transaction, and gave a most intelligent account of it, but was so miserably ignorant of even the first elements of religion, that my brother could not administer an oath to him. However, a handkerchief which was found upon the sailor, and which the poor mother swore to be her daughter's, will be sufficient to convict him.

My wretched head sent me to my pillow some hours before the beautiful phenomenon which

* Her elder brother. The man was convicted at Maidstone upon very satisfactory evidence, and executed.

you

you mention appeared. My maids gave me a very distinct account of it. I do not believe it fell any where on the earth, but was dissipated in the air. Adieu, my dear friend,

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LETTER CCXLIV.

Deal, *September* 22, 1783.

It is grievous, my dear friend, that you should be deprived of the high degree of pleasure which your benevolence would feel in the exercise of your kind intentions to your pitmen. As this wretched disease causes so great a mortality among these poor people, I should suppose the practice of inoculation is either unknown or reprobated in the North, as there is now scarcely any instance of this distemper prevailing where that method is used. I should be more alarmed at your being in such an infected air, if I had not long ago comforted myself with the persuasion that you have had this vile disorder, though I think you are perfectly right to keep out of the contagion, and hasten your return to Sandleford, where

where I shall be most happy to hear you are safe arrived.

It must be very pleasant to you that Mr. Montagu seems to have a turn for chemical and mechanical operations. A young man of large fortune cannot have too many employments to occupy his mind; and it is very happy when they are of such a nature as not merely to keep him out of idleness, which is the root of all evil, but at the same time to contribute to some useful purpose. Every virtuous and good principle he shews must rejoice your heart, because you was the planter, and it has pleased God to bless your labours, and most sincerely do I hope he will continue to add to the happiness of your life.

I am glad to receive so good an account of Mrs. Ord's * family; she is a most valuable and amiable a woman, and all who know her must rejoice at the happiness which so good a mother finds in the good conduct and prosperity of her children. Mrs. Chapone is at present at the Dean of Winchester's at Southampton. I heard from her lately; she gives a good account of herself, and all the Burrows family.

I believe there is a pretty extensive garden at

* Mrs. Ord, of Queen Ann-street, West, of whom too much good can hardly be said, and of whom the Editor believes it would be impossible to say any ill.

the

the Parthemont, so that I should think Miss Pulteney's nerves will not suffer for want of air, but be rather bettered by perhaps a less degree of violent exercise, as they will certainly likewise be much strengthened by her not being allowed to lie relaxing herself half the day in bed. It is very kind of you to feel so much interested for your god-daughter, who, I cannot help hoping, will do well. I had a very nice letter from her lately, expressing her sense of my kindness, and sorry that I had been so ill. Indeed, I am persuaded there are many fair flowers in her disposition which will grow up and flourish with proper cultivation; but they have been sadly overrun with weeds, though I hope the present system will root them out. Mr. Pulteney is gone to Paris, and I am certain if she is not happy and contented in her convent, she will be sure to let him know it.

If our Sylph stays in England this year, like you, I have no fears for the next; but this tranquillity arises merely from not looking forward to such a distance, and not from any reliance on Mr. Vesey's growing old. Instead of hobbling forward, he seems to be in a fair way of skipping backward. The sea water has proved to him a *baume de vie*. Indeed, I never saw any person in such a situation of health as his was, so much

improved,

improved. I wish I could have observed the same tokens of *rajeunissement* in Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Hancock; I think, however, our dear Sylph hears better than she did, which gave me great pleasure. I hope there can be no doubt of their remaining the winter, as they do not think of quitting Margate, till it will be much too late to go to Lucan; and what confirms me in my conjectures is, that Mrs. Vesey talked with confidence of their stay in England; and you know she never has recourse to hope, whenever she can catch at the smallest reason for despair.

I have had a visit from Mrs. Horne, who is at Margate; she is looking very well, and I have likewise had the honor of a morning visit from Lady Spencer. Her sweet smiles, alas! are all clouded by her anxiety about Lord Spencer, of whose dangerous situation she seems perfectly sensible. They are going to Bath, and from thence home. Lord Althorpe is so distressed by his father's illness, that he appears in a most amiable light. When parents dread the loss of their children, it is nature; when children, particularly in Lord Althorpe's situation, dread the loss of their parents, it is virtue. I had not this account of his Lordship from Lady Spencer, or you might think it partial. Both Lord and Lady Spencer

Spencer deserve such a son, for they have been the best of parents in every sense.

I am vexed to see by the papers that Dean Shipley's trial is put off. I neither like the character of the man, nor do I at all approve of the pamphlet; but the worst people ought not to suffer by means which might be dangerous to the best; and the least straining of the law is at all times, but particularly in times like these, of the most serious consequence *.

Have you seen Miss More's delightful *Bas bleu, Or the progress of Conversation?* As to the title of the poem, do not you remember last winter, that Madam de Montier, (or some such name; she was however the French Ambassadress) desired somebody to introduce Monsieur-son Mari to the Bas bleu? This, I suppose, as the poem is addrest to Mrs. Vesey, induced Miss More to set Bas bleu at the head of it, but probably, as to most readers it will be unintelligible †, it will not be suffered to stand if the poem is ever

* The issue of the trial which followed these proceedings, and the real author of the pamphlet in question, are now well known.

† It has since been explained in several publications, but in most, improperly. The Editor has given an account of it in his Memoirs of Mrs. Carter.

printed.

printed. You are mentioned in it, *mais cela va sans dine.*

We have now pretty well got rid of the foreign troops from America, which for some time crowded our streets, and devoured our provisions. Indeed, I am on many accounts glad they are gone. I could not help shuddering at the sight of such a number of soldiers, just arrived from that lawless region of violence, rapine, and bloodshed. May we never more, I pray, have any national connection with it!

That any gentleman should submit to such an imposition; but there are too many instances of this in England too. It is only *virtue* that walks the earth over rough and smooth, with an even steady pace. *Ambition* always either flies or creeps. Poor Ireland indeed! if that story which you heard of the mortgage is true. But what better can be expected from a military government. Have you seen the test required of their candidates? Strange ——. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXLV.

Eastrey, *October* 8, 1783.

By this time, my dear friend, you are enjoying the delightful and excellent society at Howsham *. As you do not mention what stay you mean to make there, I will direct my letter to Portman-square, there to await your leisure. I did not forget to form my very best wishes for you on the second of this month. The best wishes, indeed, of poor mortals for each other, are of little avail. But I recommended them and you to him, who alone has the power to render good wishes effectual.

I so well agree with you in respect of what you say of the Irish proceedings, that I cannot help feeling alarmed for my friends who belong

* The seat of Mr. Cholmley, in Yorkshire; one of the finest remains of Elizabethan Mansions, containing three rooms, each fifty feet in length, and wide and high in proportion. Mrs. Carter, who had been staying there for a few days, used to speak with great pleasure of the style of antient magnificence in which the family lived.

to

to that country, and who have no share in the wild schemes which at present seem carrying on. Alas, my dear friend, all the nerves of government seem to be every where relaxed; and it requires more political wisdom than we have reason to expect among our present race of statesmen, to restore them to their proper tone. Like blundering quacks, they may perhaps endeavour to remedy the evil by straining them up too tight.

We had a most extraordinary advertisement lately by the commander of a revenue sloop in the Downs *, that if any of the smugglers fired at his boats, he would make no scruple of immediately cannonading the town. If I was a man of any consequence, instead of being only a private gentlewoman, this man should be called on to defend his menaces in the Court of King's Bench. The insolence of the smugglers is no doubt very great, and certainly will be so while their trade is encouraged and supported by so very many of those people who make the laws against them; it really hurts me to see the carriages of people of the first rank in this kingdom leave this place loaded with smuggled goods; I

* This officer, a lieutenant in the royal navy, is still living, and being of a very respectable family, it is thought better not to mention his name.

must,

must, and always did think it a shameful thing, nor can I conceive how people reconcile these things to their consciences. We had lately an extraordinary transaction here. A man who had fired at the officers last winter, and absconded, was taken up, and under examination by the magistrates. His brother came into the room, and told the culprit that the offence was of so serious a nature, that he had no other chance, but of running away; he then drew out a brace of pistols, and threatened to shoot the first man who offered to stop him, and accordingly the culprit got safe off. The rescuer, however, has been seized, and is now in gaol, and most probably will be transported. The brother, if ever he is taken, will surely be hanged. What must those feel who bought their smuggled goods.

You are very good to inquire so particularly after my health; it is but a very shabby subject, not worth mentioning, for I have been a greater sufferer than usual for the last three weeks. Mrs. Pennington brought me over here for change of air, and I think I am better. You have probably seen in the papers the death of Dr. Lynch, in whom this country has lost a most excellent physician, and a very good man. Adieu, my dear friend, I shall be most happy to hear you are returned safe and sound into our southern hemisphere.

LETTER CCXLVI.

Deal, *November* 18, 1783.

It would give me much greater joy, my dear friend, to hear of Mrs. Vesey being quietly settled in Clarges-street, if I was more at ease about her health. Her opinion that the sea air hurt her would be better founded, if she had not been in exactly the same state last winter. Of medicines, even if she would take them, and I know she would not, I have no great opinion in her case. The best thing for her would be the Bath waters; I wish you could persuade Mr. Vesey to take her there; will you try? Alas, my dear friend, if we lose our sweet Sylph, whom shall we find upon earth to replace her! Indeed, I have for some time been alarmed about her.

I am glad poor amiable Lady Spencer has left Bath. Her heart must suffer most severely by this stroke, however long expected, which has separated her from a husband whom she loved with the fondest attachment, and who, I firmly believe, never felt for a moment the least abatement for his original esteem and affection for her.

If

If Lord Althorpe inherits all his father's virtues, improved by his own calmer temper, and happier education, he will be a very great blessing to society, and adorn the high station to which he is born. I am glad Lady Spencer has so good a jointure, she would make a noble use of the largest fortune, and I feel certain she will make thousands happy by what she has, which will certainly enable her to live both in great affluence, and in a generous manner.

I am glad you have seen Mr. Pulteney, as his account, notwithstanding his fondness, is, as I hear from others, very correct and fair, you may therefore judge how far the plan he has adopted is likely to succeed; and I cannot help thinking the best method he could take at her return, would be to place her under the conduct of a husband of sense and merit, before too great paternal indulgence may endanger a return of former bad habits. I hope Mr. Pulteney told you the history of the girl in the convent, to whom Miss Pulteney behaved so generously. Her's was the generosity of youth; a trait that always charms; his consent to it was regulated by the prudence of riper years; and the whole affair, I think, was greatly to the honor of both father and daughter.

What do you think of the dispute between Dr. Robert-

Robertson and Dr. Stuart about the unfortunate Queen of Scots? If you have not read Dr. Stuart's History of Scotland, I wish you would, for I think you will find it very pleasantly written; and I wish to know your opinion too as to the subject. To me it appears that by some proofs, a great deal of reasoning and conjecture, aided and abetted by the good nature of the reader, he has contrived to render the unfortunate Queen, not only a very amiable, but a very respectable character. Indeed, under the very worst imputations to which she has been exposed from the spirit of party, the treatment she experienced from Queen Elizabeth was unjust and cruel to a very high degree *; but the account Dr. Stuart gives of it, is so shocking and painful, that it can scarcely be read. O dear, O dear! How the tricks and twistings of style in some instances of modern writation, do perplex and confound my poor simple head!

* It should, however, always be recollected, that the treatment which she experienced from Queen Elizabeth, however bad, was no justification of her own previous ill conduct. That must be tried by the evidence which can be brought to bear upon it; and Stuart's defence, and Whitaker's much more able intended justification, have probably wrought little conviction on the minds of their readers.

However contemptible little circumstances may be considered in themselves, it is by these that we become acquainted with the discriminations of the principal actors in history, more than by their capital exploits. Many a thick headed hero, with the same courage and the same perseverance as Hannibal, might have dragged an equal number of troops over the Alps; but it was by a peculiar stroke of character, when Hannibal converted the fears of his army into mirth and good humour, by the ridiculous answer which he made to Gisco.

And now I am talking of history, can you tell me if there has ever been any publication of papers found in private cabinets, prior to the date of the Sidney collection. I cannot help thinking, that amongst the papers of some of our ancient nobility, there must be letters which would help to illustrate our history at a much earlier period than those Sidney papers. But, perhaps, they are fallen into the hands of heirs, who have very little curiosity to search them out, and if found, care very little about them.

I expect the Penningtons to-morrow to spend some time with me, to my great comfort, for I am never so happy as when I have them here. They have kindly taken one of my brother Harry's children; he is a very clever, good tempered little boy, with a healthy, fair round face,

and

and a fine open countenance. God bless you, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCXLVII.

' Deal, *December* 18, 1783.

THE reason, my dear friend, why I do not come to London immediately as the Penningtons leave me, is not from my being attached to any particular day, but because I really have some particular business to transact, which I have not yet had spirits or recollection sufficient to settle. My little affairs in this place were so much connected with the very dear friend whom I have lost*, that I must make new arrangements to prevent confusion to myself, and injury to others. My lodgings are taken earlier than I fear I can occupy them, which I can assure you will be the first day in my power: for indeed just now the sooner I can quit this place the better.

* Mrs. Underdown.

 I had

I had a letter lately from our dear Sylph, which was writ in a more cheerful strain than usual, on the subject of Mr. Vesey and Mrs. Hancock, so I hope she is very happy.

We have had lately sad devastations amongst our smugglers, and the amount of the seizures is very great; but so are their gains; they reckon if they save one boat out of three that they are quits, so judge what their profits are. The capital dealers in this wretched trade can bear prodigious losses without ruin. The inferior sort, if this diligence of search continues, must be undone. Though nobody can be less interested in the success of smuggling than I am, nor more abhor the practice, yet I cannot help feeling for the distresses of my poor neighbours *. Their trade is no doubt very unjustifiable, but it must very much raise one's indignation to see the rich and the great avail themselves with impunity of the frauds, for they can be called by no other name, by which these poor miserable people are brought to ruin, and absolute poverty. Never will there be any effectual or equitable law past

* Mrs. Carter's practice was, as might be expected, in exact unison with her feelings. Neither she, nor any of her family encouraged illici. trade, either by connivance or example; but they were always willing to assist their poor suffering misled neighbours by every means in their power.

against

against smuggling, unless the legislators can settle some means of punishing, in an exemplary manner, the buyers; for were there no *great* buyers, these unhappy people would not be tempted to risk their lives and properties for the very little that can be consumed in this town. But whether the higher powers will ever exert their energies to make such a law, is very doubtful to me; for when I consider how many of their coaches go loaded from this town with every article of contraband and prohibited goods, there is, I fear, little hope of any permanent good to be expected from that quarter. Living here as I do, without seeking to know, one cannot help hearing of such instances of this kind as are really quite shocking, which makes it appear to me impossible, that with the firm conviction on their minds that they are absolutely aiding and abetting these fraudulent practices, their consciences will not let them make any such laws; or perhaps, I might say their *fears* of detection. Adieu, my dear friend. I hope to see you very soon.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

Deal, *July* 19, 1784.

Whisk away, my dear friend, the further the better, and inhale the spirit of health on the open common, which it is to be hoped may retain its virtue in the crowded assembly. I would act the wild goose as well as you, so far as waddling on my feet would carry me; but I have had for some time such a sleepy heaviness all over me, that I am much more like a dormouse than a goose.

I hear from my correspondent in town, that the sudden death of Lady —— seems to have excited a particular degree of seriousness. Such a conclusion of a life so spent, is indeed an awful and terrible warning. One of my friends remarks, that she never knew any body die, but that some good quality or other sprung out of their ashes, except her ladyship. The common people say, that the devil run away with her body. She tells me that the old ladies are in a fearful alarm at the sudden stroke which hurried this unhappy

unhappy woman into eternity. It will be most happy for them, if the impression is sufficiently strong, to withdraw them from the dissipations and follies of this world, into that decent retirement befitting their age, and which would give them leisure to bestow some thoughts on the world to come, then would she not have died in vain, at least to these her companions in folly.

From an authority which seems too good, I am informed that Mrs. Thrale is by this time Signora Piozzi, and that her daughters have chosen another guardian. Is it true? I am sorry if it is, but not surprized; and she always seemed to be a genius of that eccentric kind, which is mighty apt to be accompanied by "a plentiful lack" of common sense.

Do not you think it monstrous, that on the proposal of every new tax, one set of people or other rise up to oppose it? Surely this spirit tends to introduce nothing but anarchy and confusion. In all civil society, there must be absolute power lodged somewhere. In our's, that power is most happily vested in the laws, and every attempt to overset them, must tend to the subversion of all government. What innumerable mischiefs have been brought upon this country by wretches, *soi disant* patriots!

My nephew Montagu has been at Oxford to take

take his master's degree, and from thence went to Gloucester to spend some time with a friend *, whom he has known from his infancy, and with whom he has always lived in habits of the strictest friendship and affection †. They went together this spring to Boulogne, to visit a relation of this young man's, who, with a most exemplary character, and a large fortune, is obliged to live in exile by the extravagance of a worthless husband. It is grievous to see every day how people

* The Rev. Cooper Willyams, afterwards Rector of Kingston and of Stourmouth in Kent; the former of which livings was presented to him in the most kind and liberal manner by his friend Sir Egerton Brydges. He was well known to the literary world as author of "the Campaign in the West Indies," under Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis; and of a "Voyage up the Mediterranean in Lord Nelson's fleet, with a description of the Battle of the Nile;" both adorned with much-admired drawings, from sketches by himself on the spot.

† Only broken by the fatal stroke which, a few months since, deprived his family of an affectionate husband and father, and his friends of a companion endued with qualities peculiarly amiable and social. Among them, the Editor in particular, had long cherished the fond hope, that as the gay hours of their early life had been rendered more delightful, so their declining years might be supported by the company of each other; and that they might thus continue to journey together towards the grave, as they had lived, cheered by the same comforts, enlivened by the same hopes.

contrive

contrive to pervert the blessings of heaven into curses and instruments of wretchedness, by their own follies and wickedness.

I hope you were not disappointed in the pleasure you expected of a visit from Dr. Beattie. I am very glad he is come to England, for such weak spirits as his, greatly need the relaxation of society.

If I live till next winter, I may probably read Mr. Coxe, though it is a formidable undertaking, and not absolutely necessary to give me a hearty dislike of the constitution of Poland. One need not seek for more arguments against it, than its tolerating an order of slaves. I hope you will soon have an account of the removal of good Mr. Smelt's gouty cough. I quite rejoice in the prospect of seeing him, and his most excellent partner, in town next winter. My best compliments wait on Mr. Montagu, and I am, my dear friend, &c.

LETTER CCXLIX.

Deal, *August* 24, 1784.

MANY thanks to you, my dear friend, for kindly obviating the alarm which I certainly should have felt, if I had heard the terrible story you mention; for no one ever tells a circumstance exactly as it is; a word more or less often alters the whole face of the thing, and alarms are often excited to a great degree, by that want of truth, which is in my opinion the greatest charm in life. From your account of the dog, there seems not the least reason in the world to suppose him mad. I hope, however, for the future Mr. Montagu will be more cautious of putting his hand into a dog's mouth; for it is very unsafe trusting to an irrational creature, which may often do the mischief which it does not mean, and it is not pleasant to have one's fingers bit, be it ever so little dangerous.

You are not to draw any conclusions from my scanty number of German books; for I believe there is a great number of excellent authors in that

that language, indeed many more than could be supposed, from the little encouragement they receive in their own country, where so foolish a preference is given to French writings. Do not you remember a lady telling us at Spa, that she had never read Gesner's Death of Abel; but in a French translation. Some of the German books of fiction are exquisitely well written; but I should think them very dangerous reading for young people, from a singular art which they have of sanctifying the passions. There is one novel, however, which I would recommend to Mr. Montagu. *Sophiens Reise,* I think, is the title. It is a long work, and contains a most astonishing variety of characters. I have never heard that it has been translated into French, or I should much wish you to read it.

I am at present engaged in reading Captain Cook's last Voyage, which is tolerably amusing. I am delighted with the Russians, they appear to great advantage, from the gentleness of their government over the harmless inhabitants of Kamschatka, and the care they have taken to instruct them in the Christian religion. It was quite a relief to me to get into this region of stormy winds, and frozen seas, and snowy mountains, because I found it peopled by human creatures; after I had been so long shocked by the horrid

horrid manners of the wretched barbarians who inhabit the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Such kinds of writing help one to entertain high ideas of the wisdom and candour of French philosophers, &c. in the encomiums which, in opposition to Christianity, they so lavishly bestow on the advantages of savage life. I am likewise reading Madame de Genlis's "Veillées du Chateau," which, so far as I have gone, I think a most excellent work. Most probably you have read it, if not, I cannot be easy till you do. Lady Holdernesse, who is at Deal Castle, lent me both these books.

I hear that Miss Thrale for the present has placed herself with Mrs. Beaver, in Dover-street, which is a proof of her good sense, and a most prudent scheme. Poor Signora Piozzi had indeed I believe uncommon parts, which probably had been injured by that mode of education, of which talents and accomplishments constitute the essential points. Talents and accomplishments are very graceful ornaments, but when they are not founded on solid principles, and rules of prudent conduct, they only help to furnish people with ingenious devices of acting egregiously wrong. If the mind is left totally to itself, though it may seldom rise to excellence, it will as seldom be remarkable for any great eccentricities, but it will

will pursue the common track of action. But the conceit which accompanies superficial qualities, sets all usual forms of proceeding at defiance, and people thus educated run wild after every pursuit that their irregular fancies or passions happen to offer to their view. Indeed, I do with you pity Miss Burney and Dr. Johnson; poor man, I once saw him very *indigné*, when somebody jested about Mrs. Thrale's marrying himself. The choice would, no doubt, have been singular; but much less exceptionable than that which she has made.

I quite agree with you that the great defect of Mr. Pitt's system, is the want of proper supporters. But how can he remedy that? I hope when the Primate goes to Bath, you will be tempted by his society to drink the waters, and lay in a stock of health for the winter. I was at Eastrey for a week, and there was not one day in which the weather would allow us to stir out, however, I was with my friends, tolerably well, and very happy, and I was most perfectly contented. Dr. and Mrs. Pennington brought me home, and left me this morning; they are now obliged to go to Tunstal. I shall quite long for their return, they seem so far off there, and I know they like Eastrey best, and I like best they should be there.

I had

I had a letter last week from our dear Sylph from Margate, in which she gives me no hopes of seeing her. I should be more mortified at this disappointment, if she did not express herself in a manner which gives me no reason to doubt their intention of spending next winter in London. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER CCL.

Deal, *September* 3, 1784.

It gives me great joy, my dear friend, whenever I contemplate you travelling over hill and dale in your whiskey, which I consider as a constant acquisition of health, and a chance, so far as human means can contribute, for comfortable length of days. May it be attended with that blessing, which alone can render the most probable hopes effectual!

I hope you will keep the addition of spirits which this mode of exercise must inspire within such due order as befits an inhabitant of *terra firma*, and not think of transporting yourself to

the empyræum in an air-balloon. The famous Monsieur Blanchard has been at Deal, and has fixed on a spot on the South Foreland, from whence he proposes to begin his flight over the sea to Calais. This exploit is not to take place till October, when the equinoctial storms are past. The gentleman at whose house Mons. Blanchard was, told me, that he is extremely enthusiastical on this subject, and treats any idea of danger from the aërial mode of travelling, with the greatest contempt, from the security of the principles on which the vehicle is constructed. I suppose that the principles upon which a post-chaise moves upon the earth are equally secure; and yet some small derangement in the mechanical part, might chance to overturn it; and from such an accident, the best constructed balloon can have no warrant of exception. Now *non deplaise à Monsieur Blanchard,* a tumble from the clouds is rather a more formidable object, than the breaking of a wheel, or an axle on a turnpike road.

From your account of Mr. Coxe, I shall certainly borrow him if I live to come to London. I have finished Capt. Cook and Madame de Genlis; and am now got into delightful company, among the Sévignés, Coulanges, &c. in some volumes which do not belong to my own set, and

which

which I do not remember reading before. I think you told me that you had heard that the Chateau de Grignan was pulled down; but set your heart at ease, for I am told by Lady Holdernesse that it is certainly standing, and purchased by another family; for, alas! all the descendants of the amiable Madame de Sévigné are extinct except two ladies, one of whom is a disgrace to the memory of such an ancestor, and indeed very remarkably profligate.

Probably you have heard from our dear Sylph that she has been in a very uncomfortable situation. Mr. Vesey's own man, who was well acquainted with the treatment of him in his frightful fits, is seized with madness to so high a degree that they are obliged to have him confined. Many of our sweet friend's little misfortunes make us smile; but this is indeed too reasonable a cause of distress.

The Sorrows of Werter I have always thought a detestable book; but I know of no other in German that is exceptionable in the same horrid way.

The place which you describe seems but ill adapted to poor Dr. Beattie's state of spirits. He should have gone to some social, gay bathing place, where cheerful trifling might have withdrawn his mind from objects which a gloomy so-

litude will only render more present and painful. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLI.

Deal, *October* 1, 1784.

PERHAPS in the shelter of your groves at Sandleford, you feel but little effects of this rough wind, or I should fear it would interrupt your walks and airing; however unpleasant it may be, I comfort myself with the hope that it may be very beneficial in drying the earth, and preventing many ill consequences from the excessive damps of this excessive wet summer.

I sympathize with you in the distress of the reprobation of your copper coin; the prohibition in London is very whimsical; sometimes a halfpenny is as accurately examined as a guinea, and at others, all kinds pass without difficulty. Suppose Mr. Brown was to load a ship, and send it to London for your *menus besoins* in Portman-square. I do not say *plaisirs*, for I do not think it would be very creditable to send a bag full to

purchase a ticket for the Opera, or a box for Mrs. Siddons's benefit. But your kitchen maid might turn it to good account for matches, brick-dust, and other such articles. It is very necessary that ornament should give place to convenience, or I should lament the loss of your trees, which have fallen a sacrifice to brick-buildings.

Lady Lucan may be very right in affirming that convents in general are wretched places for education. But I do not think that the Parthemont is in particular worse than any other. The Abbess is of very high rank, and some of the first nobility have been placed there, which is I think a proof that she is neither a witch nor an ideot. Some of the nuns are very sensible, very clever, and as well brought up, as people in their situation can possibly be. However, I believe a young lady will find much better lessons for acquiring polite manners, by conversing with the best company for a winter in London, than are to be met with in all the convents, or even all the *chapitres* in Europe. But, indeed, the motive for placing Miss P. there, was not so much for her to *learn* what she might have been so much better taught in her own country, as that she might *unlearn* habits unfortunately contracted by too great indulgence; for, from her infancy, she

she was never taught to consult any thing but her own will. She has now been two years under authority she could not resist; and I hope the habit of following no guide but her own fancy is broke, and that her good sense, and very many amiable good qualities and sweetness of disposition, may be at liberty to exert themselves, and to regulate her conduct, so that she may be a blessing to her father, and all who surround her. I think she is much thinner and taller than when she went to France. I had a most kind letter from her yesterday, she says they are going into Northamptonshire for a short time.

I dined once at Stoke with Lord Bottetourt; and was carried there once merely to see it, by Mrs. Anne Pitt. It is certainly a very fine place; but if the Duchess of Beaufort lives there quite alone, I should think she would find it rather too melancholy for her spirits, which have suffered so many, and such grievous trials.

I could not help feeling glad that the Royal family had enjoyed the amusement of seeing more than I believe they ever did before of the very beautiful country in which they possess the highest rank.

Mr. Pennington has been three times over to see our dear Sylph, and makes a very good report of all the family. Mr. Vesey is well enough

to attend all the balls. I beg to be very kindly remembered to Mrs. Garrick. I quite condole with you, that you cannot have your party completed by such an addition as Miss More.

Mrs. Chalié's family are at Deal; for the benefit of her health, she is ordered to bathe in the sea, and thinks herself already the better for it; her two daughters are with her, they are grown up, are extremely well informed and accomplished, and have a simplicity of character quite free from all affectation; in short they are exactly such *éleves*, as one might expect from so excellent a mother; she is a most amiable woman. Did I tell you Miss Hamilton is going to be married to a Mr. Dickenson of Derbyshire, it is a long attachment, and the suitor is approved of by all the family. Montagu is returned from his Gloucestershire tour, and is very much delighted with his rambles; he speaks quite with rapture of the banks of the Wye, and of Tintern Abbey. Believe me, my dear friend, yours, &c.

LETTER CCLII.

Deal, *November* 9, 1784.

A very bad fit of the head-ache yesterday, which rendered me incapable of holding my pen, could alone have prevented me, my dearest friend, from expressing my congratulations and thankfulness, for your escape from so terrifying an accident. As no ill consequences followed the alarm, I rejoice with you, not only in the proof which it gave you of the attention and affection of your nephew, but on the reflections which such a deliverance must have raised in your mind. When every thing appears to go on regularly and smoothly, the wisest and best of poor inconsiderate mortals are too apt to slumber in unthinking security; till some open instance of extraordinary preservation awakens them to a quick and lively sense of dependance on Him, whose ever watchful providence protects them in the innumerable unseen dangers to which they are exposed in every instant of their existence. Such thoughts must arise in every thinking mind, and always accompanied with an encrease of

grateful feelings to that beneficent and gracious God, to whom we owe all we have, and all we are.

I am glad the weather has been so favorable to your planting and building. Autumn has not been so gentle with us. Indeed, I believe, the whole year has been particularly unfavorable in this country. The crops have, by what I hear, been more plentiful, and the corn less injured in other parts of England. Dr. Pennington says, he never had his barns so empty, and that the wheat is very much grown, and consequently it is to be feared unwholesome. To counteract its ill effects as far as may be, I have my bread and pye-crust made with nearly half potatoes; and my puddings without any flour.

This neighbourhood is alarmed with apprehensions of house-breakers, of whom there is said to be a gang lurking about this neighbourhood. I have heard of only one robbery properly authenticated, except the two burglaries at Dover, for which both the culprits are under condemnation. That wretch Dixon, who was tried and acquitted for the murder of Mr. Linton is one of them. His father to save his own neck, was the evidence against him. How horrible are the effects of wickedness, when it leads men to such

dreadful actions! A father to be the means of his own son's condemnation!

The manner in which the stolen goods were discovered is so extraordinary, as it was related to me, that it can scarcely be accounted for on any common course of events. Most important was the discovery to the poor man who had been robbed, as he had not only lost his property, but his character, by the uncharitable supposition that he had robbed himself. Accordingly the transport that he felt when the detection was made, was so excessive, that a surgeon who was present, was in great apprehensions it would have killed him. With all that he will recover, I hear he still loses £200.

I rejoice to hear you are going to Bath, I always consider you there, as collecting a provision of health against the winter dissipations. I have enticed the Penningtons' to spend this gloomy month with me, for it is sad being alone in bad weather, but let the weather be what it will, I am always most happy to have them; they make the house alive. With best compliments to Mr. Montagu, I remain, my dear friend, yours, &c.

LETTER CCLIII.

Deal, *December* 19, 1784.

It will be very well for you, my dear friend, if you never recover my vagabond letter, for after making such a progress, if it straggles to you at last, it will cost you much more than it is worth. You would not so much regret leaving Sandleford, if your weather resembled our's. It rains incessantly.

The account which you mention of the state of the Americans, must be rather awkward to the great admirers of their wisdom and virtue, by which they were to achieve the seat of empire. One must be sorry for the poor deluded people, who have made so sad an exchange. I wish them in a happier situation; but I must hope for the good of my country, that they may never think of returning to us.

I believe I mentioned to you the alarm we were all in about robbing. Last week a banker's compting-house was broke open in the town; but the cash was so well secured, that the rogue got nothing, and left his tools behind him. The next

next night another house was attempted, but the owner woke up just as the man had got one leg in at the window, which so alarmed the thief that he made the best of his way off. During all the years of a long life that I have known this place, there never was one quarter of the robberies there has been in the last few weeks. Indeed, indeed, these are very sad times. I had a letter yesterday from my nephew in Berkshire, who says they are all in the greatest consternation there, from the prisoners having broke out of Reading gaol.

I had received an account of B——'s horrid behaviour, but did not know, till by your letter, what was become of him. Poor Lady —— is indeed greatly to be pitied. Are you at all acquainted with Lady ——? I hear she does not design to quit her wretched husband? This young man at his first setting out, appeared to have such uncommon parts, and so much knowledge, that it might have been reasonably hoped, that when the coxcomb was outgrown, he would have made a very distinguished figure in society. When he afterwards so extravagantly and ridiculously addicted himself to music, all prospect of his becoming great or respectable was over; but till this last sad story, I never heard that his conduct

conduct was vicious. I have been told that Mr. Burton, though he had himself been a professor of music, had the good sense, and good nature to remonstrate very strongly with —— against his absurd and excessive fondness for it.

I see by the papers, that Dr. Johnson is dead. In extent of learning, and exquisite purity of moral writing, he has left no superior, and I fear very few equals. His virtues and his piety were founded on the steadiest of Christian principles and faith *. His faults, I firmly believe, arose from the irritations of a most suffering state of nervous constitution, which scarcely ever allowed him a moment's ease.

I beg my most affectionate remembrances to the Bowdler family †. I grieve for their danger of

* Mrs. Carter told the Editor, that, in one of the last conversations which she had with this eminent moralist, she told him that she had never known him say any thing contrary to the principles of the Christian religion. He seized her hand with great emotion, exclaiming, "You know this, and bear witness to it when I am gone."

† It is now about two years since this excellent family, by the death of John Bowdler, Esq. Jun. of Lincoln's Inn, suffered the severe and afflicting loss of one who promised to be the most distinguished and shining ornament of a race, in which there are and have been, so many persons, eminent for virtue, talent, and religion.

of so soon parting with that most good and amiable man. I have just now a message from Eastrey, to say that Dr. Pennington's carriage is coming to fetch me. Nothing less than sisterly love could carry me out with such an aching-head; but Mrs. Pennington has been dreadfully alarmed about a mad Curate, whom the Doctor was troubled to get rid of, and who threatened his life. I must therefore go and see what I can do towards raising her spirits, and shall from thence proceed to town. I rejoice to hear that your health bids defiance to the elements, long, very long may it continue, which will be a great happiness to yours, &c.

It is impossible to read his "Select Pieces in Prose and Verse," printed, but not published, by his venerable father since his decease, without the highest degree of pleasure, admiration, and regret. For this valuable and edifying present, the Editor is indebted to the kindness of George Gipps, Esq. M.P. for Ripon, who married his sister.

LETTER CCLIV.

Clarges-street, *June* 1, 1785.

MANY thanks, my dear friend, for your kind account of your safe arrival at Sandleford, and its good effects on your health. It is vexatious that you should find your house so ill prepared for your reception; but you act more wisely than most people would do in such a case, by not suffering it to discompose your mind; but comfort yourself that the wretched bunglers who have demolished your own habitation, have not molested the nests of your nightingales. Indeed there is much reason for the thankfulness which you express for the watchful care of a gracious Providence, which has, by a timely discovery, preserved you from the dangers to which you were exposed by the carelessness or villainy of your wretched builders. From whatever cause this strange event arose, one cannot help wishing, for the safety of society, that some legal method might be found by a proper punishment of these people, to deter others from the same kind of practice.

Mr.

Mr. Vesey for some days has been growing weaker; and last night Mrs. Hancock told me she thought he could not survive many hours. Dr. Warren was of the same opinion. Dear Mrs. Vesey wishes to be flattered, but I cannot speak so much against my own opinion as to give her any hopes. She is, poor soul, greatly distrest, and one cannot hope she can at present grow better. In a state of suspense, the mind is incapacitated from making any exertion. When all is over, I am persuaded she will be reasonable and resigned. I am happy in the hope that I am of some little use in withdrawing her thoughts from dwelling every moment on the same melancholy subject; and I spend as much of every day with her as possible. To this my affection would naturally lead me, and she has certainly a claim to every attention in my power, to alleviate the burden of her melancholy hours, as she always kindly gave me a share in those that were most pleasant. Lord and Lady Dartrey are gone for a few weeks into Devonshire on account of the children, who have had the hooping-cough. This is very unlucky for our poor friend; but Lord Lucan is in town, and I am persuaded will give her every assistance in his power; her weak health, and very little knowledge of business, will, poor soul! make her need all his kind attentions.

I saw

I saw Mr. Montagu on Wednesday at Mrs. Garrick's, and he seemed as well as it is possible for a lover to be in his condition; fretting most heartily, at the slowness and unfeelingness of lawyers. Lord Southampton is quite reconciled to his son's marriage with Miss Keppel, and has behaved kindly and liberally to the young people, which I am glad of, for they were much attached.

Every body is preparing for the commemoration of the birth-day, after which the town will probably grow very empty. As neither commemoration nor drawing-room form any part of my system, I propose, in all quietness and simplicity, to set out for the sea-shore on Monday next.

I am just returned from our poor suffering friend; would to God it was all over. I thought before I closed my letter, I should inform you of the conclusion of poor Mr. Vesey's twilight of mortal existence; but it is not yet total darkness, though very near it; he is quite insensible, and cannot swallow, yet she cannot be prevailed on to quit him. She desires her love to you, and has often expressed a deep sense of your kindness in the assistance you offered her, though she is determined not to accept any from any person whatever. I hope all will turn out well; but the will is in Ireland, and I have fearful doubts.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear friend; if either you or Mr. Montagu want a trust-worthy servant, the man who has gone through so much, with such fidelity and affectionate care with Mr. Vesey, will soon be at liberty. All their servants are exemplary; but our dear friend is the charm that moves them, it is impossible to resist not only her will but her wishes; and her conduct through this trying time has been most admirable. Once more adieu.

LETTER CCLV.

Deal, *June* 24, 1785.

The London mark of your letter was 15th, though it was dated the 9th, so that there must have been some strange delay somewhere, probably in the post at Newbury, which deprived me of the pleasure of hearing sooner from you. I had a very pleasant journey down, but my spirits were a good deal affected at the sufferings of our dear Sylph.

I perfectly agree with you in not placing any confidence

confidence in death-bed prayers, as of efficacy to atone for an ill spent life. All the comfort one can reasonably derive from them with regard to such individuals as are desirous of them, is, that they do not set the Divine Justice at defiance, by adding to their other sins, the dreadful aggravation of leaving the world in hardened impenitence. Poor Mr. Vesey was in such a state as to be totally insensible to this awful solemnity, but it was, I assure you, very affecting, and I hope useful to the servants, who were all in tears. I believe they are all very sober, honest people; and their laborious and affectionate discharge of their duty to their master, during his long illness and infirmities, was such as could not be exceeded by the tenderest and most watchful friend.

Your account of the manner of Mrs. Robinson's leaving the world, is equally touching and edifying. How poor, in that awful hour, appear all the triumphs of ambition compared with the sober, beneficial, and unostentatious virtues of private life, inspired and supported by the principles and the rewards of the Gospel!

I have not had half the enjoyment of the country you suppose, and there is much more danger of my walking too little, than too much, against which you so kindly caution me. This long north-east wind obscures every landscape, and leaves

leaves very little beauty to the country. However I walk when I can, and if I gain nothing else by my endeavours, but the keeping up the struggle against the languor of constitutional disorders, and the indolence of age, it is worth the trial.

I do not know that our dear friend has imbibed any of Rousseau's absurdities. I wrote to her some time ago, but have not heard from her since. I should have writ to her again, but since I have heard of this execrable will *, I know not how to express myself for fear of hurting her, till I know in what manner she speaks of it herself. It is to be hoped this treatment may help to lessen her grief for so unworthy a man. Yet it must give a sad stroke to her heart, to retain very little remembrance of one whom she so long and so tenderly loved, but what is mixed with very painful recollections.

I hope your *sejour* at Hampton will contribute as much to your health, as I am persuaded it will to your pleasure. I beg to be very affectionately remembered to Mrs. Garrick.

I have not half the leisure time here that I have in London. One half of my time is spent on my

* This alludes to the very inadequate provision made for Mrs. Vesey, by Mr. Vesey's will; but his nephew and heir acted towards her with great kindness and liberality.

pillow, the other half passes much more frequently in society than in solitude. Indeed the London life has not that hurry and bustle to me, as it might have if I was of more importance. My insignificance exempts me from the forms and ceremonies to which higher situations are subject; and my hours pass quietly in the society of my friends; without mixing in what is called the world, I partake of that vivacity which always enlivens conversation in a great metropolis.

Very shocking, indeed, was the catastrophe of the last aërial excursion *. It will be happy if this sad adventure puts an end to so wild an abuse of courage and activity. After a pretty long trial, no one discovery has been made, that tends to any useful purpose, either physical or moral, any more than by the safer experiment of a paper kite. Poor Mr. Rozier had just married a lady of very considerable fortune. Several people in this neighbourhood were acquainted with him. His fate is particularly pitiable, if it be true, as I have been told, that it was extremely against his inclination, that he undertook this fatal flight; but it is said the King of France insisted on his crossing the sea.

* The death of Pilatre de Rozier near Boulogne, in his ascent in a Mongolfier-balloon which took fire in the air.

It is happy that the riots about the shop-tax, for which there were evident preparations, were crushed without mischief. Have you heard that Lord George Gordon is won over, and become an implement for the ministry in a secret way? I do not know that this is true, but I find that there are many people of sense who believe it to be so. Dr. and Mrs. Pennington have been staying with me for some days, and my sister has had a strange kind of accident. One of her fingers was much inflamed and very painful: the surgeon opened it, and cut pretty deep, when lo and behold he took out a pin which was buried in it; her finger is now doing well, and I hope in God no bad consequences will ensue.

I picked up a book the other day called a History of Modern Europe, I am very much pleased with it. It is one of the clearest and best arranged compendiums I ever saw, did you ever see it; or do you know who is the author*? I am sorry to find the lawyers have so very little feeling and consideration for the situation of your lovers; and likewise that you were disappointed of the music, which I am told was astonishingly fine. I was offered a ticket, but did not find myself equal to the fatigue. Adieu, my dear friend.

* This work has since been published with the name of the author, Mr. Russel.

LETTER CCLVI.

Deal, *July* 25, 1785.

My dear Friend,

THERE can be little doubt that the happiness of your amiable young people will be lasting, while it is founded upon such principles as you describe; the only principles on which a sure foundation of right conduct, and a cheerful enjoyment of the blessings of life, can be immovably fixed. As for poor Mr. Vesey, his mind, it is to be feared, was very little influenced by religion or religious principles, therefore his base treatment of our amiable and dear friend is the less wonderful. Mere constitutional good humour, and specious civility, are mighty pretty decorations of an afternoon visit, but operate very little at home, or in the important duties of life. Mr. Montagu has, thank God, been differently brought up, and, I trust, will through life retain those principles which you so forcibly describe; and will, I hope, be a blessing to you, and to all belonging to him, for "where much is "given, much is required."

Lady

Lady Charlotte Finch has been most alarmingly ill, but is, thank God, very much better. My own heart would deeply feel the loss of so dear and excellent a friend; and when I consider the consequence of such a life to her family, and to the world, the apprehension of danger becomes to a very high degree affecting.

Did I mention to you, that Madame de Genlis was an hour and a half with the Queen, to whom she was introduced by Lady Pembroke? I find all who have conversed with Madame de Genlis are delighted and enchanted with her.

The death of the Duchess of Portland is certainly an extensive loss. Even to common acquaintance, her uniform civility, and perfect good temper, rendered her society very pleasant. But to poor Mrs. Delany her death is a calamity which nothing in this world can compensate. She sent me word by Mrs. Dickenson, that her health has not suffered, and that she hopes God will enable her to support her afflictions with resignation. I believe Mr. Dewes is a most worthy man, and I am persuaded will give Mrs. Delany all the consolation she can receive from his attentions.

I had a letter lately from our dear Mrs. Vesey, who gives me the pleasure of knowing that their circum-

circumstances*, though not affluent, will be comfortable, and that they will be able to keep a carriage. I find she has almost worn herself out with tears and fretting. What can we say to her? The subject is delicate, especially as it is very probable, that she retains great affection for the ungrateful husband, who so ill deserved it. There can be no reasoning with her feelings. The only method of relief is, for her to forget him as fast as she can. By all that I have heard, her friends in Ireland have endeavoured with very generous warmth to promote her interest.

We have part of a regiment here which served during most part of the war in America. I have sometimes met the Colonel; and one day in talking on American subjects, I asked him if he thought it probable that the States would be formed into a settled government. He answered, that it seemed scarcely possible, for that the thirteen Provinces were as totally different in character, manners, &c. from one another, as each of them is from the Japanese.

Your account of the milk-woman's treatment of Miss More is really shocking. It is the more extraordinary, as when our friend was in town, she

* That is, of Mrs. Vesey, and Mrs. Hancock who lived with her.

mentioned

mentioned to me I think more than once, what good accounts she received from Bristol of her behaviour; what can have so soon produced such a change? One would think by her conduct to Miss More, joined to the absurdity of her dress, that the poor woman was seized with a sudden frenzy. I beg my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. M. Montagu, and am, my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLVII.

Deal, *August* 20, 1785.

Most sincerely do I join with you, my dear friend, in thanking Almighty God for restoring to our poor dear helpless friend the greatest of all her earthly blessings, by the recovery of Mrs. Hancock. Your intentions with regard to Mrs. Vesey were worthy of yourself, and I hope will be rewarded by rejoicing with her when you meet in town, instead of the melancholy office of condoling a loss, which in this world must have been irreparable. Do not you

hope

hope that the difference which our dear friend must have felt between the sad prospect of that real misfortune with which she was threatened, and her sentimental distress for the loss of one who had so very little contributed to her happiness, may help to compose her mind, and restore her cheerfulness? Nothing so much contributes to cure one of unreasonable regrets, as some strong experimental proof of the comparison between real and imaginary evils. Miss A. Clarke, who has a most sensible head, and a most benevolent heart stays in town, because she thinks, and truly thinks, that she is a comfort to poor Mrs. Vesey.

You concluded from your own feelings when you supposed the Duchess of Portland had amply provided for her friend; but the Duchess left no will, various causes are assigned for this omission; but none that I believe *you* would think sufficient to account for the neglect of her friend. The King and Queen have, in the most kind and delicate manner, made Mrs. Delany an offer of a very pretty ready furnished house at Windsor for her summer residence: and the King has given her three hundred a year to answer the additional expence. This is truly royal munificence. The death of the Duchess of Portland was occasioned by a total and sudden failure of her whole constitution.

stitution. She had very little fever, and no pain.

Our wheat here has not yet suffered by the rain, and there is, thank God, a prospect of very great plenty. The post tax will be a heavy one indeed, if it deprives me of the pleasure of hearing from you, when you have no other reason for delaying it; but pray, pray do not let this be a *sufficient reason* again.

My compliments attend your happy pair. Adieu, my dear friend; my spirits are so low I scarce know how to write. I have, however, written a few lines to our poor dear Mrs. Vesey, though it is a sad task. Will not you also write to her, and endeavour to persuade her to take more care of herself than she seems inclined to do, for I hear she seems to live on air and cold water; God strengthen her in his infinite mercy, for he alone can. What very poor creatures we are in the hour of trial, especially when there is not that firm reliance, where alone it ought to be put. God bless you.

LETTER CCLVIII.

Deal, *September* 22, 1785.

My dear Friend,

It rejoices me to hear so good an account of our dear Mrs. Vesey's affairs: Mr. G. Vesey I find maintains the coach, which is very handsome of him; but I have always heard him extremely well spoken of, and Mrs. Hancock's income joined to her's, makes nine hundred a year, which will I hope enable them to live comfortably. I wish you would try the effect of your advice on the subject of her strange perseverance in continuing to weep so immoderately for what so little deserves her tears; and which it would have been her duty to check, if the subject had been ever so worthy; but alas! she has no resolution. If any body can influence her, it is you.

I hope there was no foundation for the late talk in the papers about war. I fear things do not go on smoothly in Ireland. I had a letter from a friend there lately, who says Louis d'ors are flying about Dublin in great plenty; and likewise told me, that the resolutions would not pass.

pass. It is something pretty singular, that while our opposition here was raving against these resolutions as too favorable to Ireland, they should have been thrown out there, for a directly contrary reason.

I perfectly agree with you in the very little esteem I have for a virtuoso task. Besides the useless and undue expence to which it continually offers a temptation, it contracts the understanding, and checks the flight of imagination, while it keeps the attention poring upon minute objects. I agree with you that every work of the great Creator is worthy the utmost attention of man. Yet a scientific scrutiny into natural objects, though it ought to be treated with respect, as productive of many useful discoveries to society, is not often very beneficial to the mind of the investigator. It is true, that the philosopher who examines the wonderful internal construction of natural objects, must discern the *power* and *wisdom* of the Supreme Being; but the superficial spectator who, with a refined imagination, and a sensible heart, surveys the external beauties of the universe, feels his *goodness*.

Did you ever read Diodorus Siculus? It never fell in my way till this summer. The narration is very pleasant, and the arrangement of the history most admirable. If you are not acquainted

quainted with this excellent work, do pray furnish yourself with a very delightful entertainment.

It is no wonder your spirits should be so much depressed by the loss of an old and valuable friend. You have my most sincere congratulations, that you are in possession of the best of consolations under such a misfortune, in the conviction that he not only lived, but left this world with such dispositions as were the best qualifications for the happiness of a better. I quite grieve for poor Mrs. Oglethorpe. The good old General and she seemed to be so happy, and to have such a cordial affection for each other, that the separation must be very grievous.

I never till your letter heard a syllable of the extraordinary report, which you mention. If it is true, I am persuaded it is with the full consent of the lady, as I am firmly convinced she will not in this important article be under any restraint, or even bias, from her father, whose whole and only wish is for her happiness. When I last heard from her, he was going to carry her to the Shrewsbury races.

What do you think of the commotions on the Continent? The Dutch seem to be in a wretched condition from their intestine discords. Our factions and dissentions in this country are often very

very mischievous; but factions and dissentions in a Republic, if long continued, must end in its ruin.

Yes, indeed, we did feel the storm on the sixth of this month in full force. The Downs was full of ships, and many of them were damaged; but as a south-west wind affects this coast less than any other, I hope none were entirely lost. The effect was more violent by land. Many chimnies here were blown down, roofs uncovered, and the bricks and tiles rattled most fearfully. I have lost a great many, but am thankful it is no worse. The corn was scattered about the fields, and blown over the hedges; the orchards were strown with fruit, and the hops torn from the poles. Mrs. Cosnan, who has some of the finest in this country, told me that her's are entirely spoilt. Several trees were snapt in sunder. I had the mortification lately to see two most beautiful elms, which used to shadow a stile on which I often repose, and read in my walks, irreparably demolished. I am so simple, that I grieve for the loss of every tree that shadowed my youth, as for the loss of a friend; but when people come to my age every day produces feelings of this kind; and nothing but the firm persuasion, that there is a better world, where neither sorrows, nor even uneasy sensations come, recon-

reconciles one to travel on with tolerable cheerfulness towards that bourn, to which all our steps tend. As you say nothing about your groves, I hope they escaped unhurt. I meet nobody who remembers any thing like it at this time of year. All agree it was to the full as violent as that which happened some years ago in January.

You have doubtless seen in the papers the death of Sir William Lynch. Poor Lady Lynch must be in a most pitiable situation. She was always subject at times to dreadful dejection of spirits, and Sir William's tenderness and attention to her were beyond description. She is now left to feel the loss of such a husband in a foreign country, and I believe without a friend or companion, for the person who went abroad with her I hear is married, and has left her. Of all Dean Lynch's children which I remember so numerous, none is now left but the youngest son, and he is unmarried.

I rejoice your young folks are returned to you; pray make my compliments to them, and believe me, my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLIX.

Deal, *November* 24, 1785.

My dear Friend,

Your cold I hope has played you no worse tricks than that of venting its spite in sneezing, and that I hope will suffice for the winter. Though your account of our dear Niobe is not so favorable as all who love her could wish, I hope she is not worse upon the whole than she was last winter, when I often observed the same failure of memory which you now mention. As this uncomfortable symptom varies, I am willing to flatter myself, that as her nerves, which have been so dreadfully shook for the last two years, get stronger, and her tranquillity is restored, she will grow better.

For five days out of six I have had so bad a head ache, I have been incapable of doing any thing. I certainly owe this additional pain in some degree to a fine fashionable lady from London, who poisons the atmosphere round her with highly perfumed powder; there is something to me

me very disgusting, as well as unpleasant, in people being perfumed; and I believe I am not singular in thinking there must be some secret reason for such artificial smells *, add to which, my poor head cannot stand them, therefore while she stays here, she will effectually exclude me from all society, of which she makes a part, which is particularly vexatious, as she belongs to a family of which I see more than of any other in this place.

I am glad to hear a circumstance so very honorable to Lord Lucan, as his paternal care and generous treatment of Miss Molesworth. Poor Mrs. Hartley has indeed suffered a very severe trial. It is happy for her amidst her misfortunes that Providence has bestowed on her such a friend, as not only relieves her wants, but so kindly endeavours to sooth her sorrow.

I believe I told you some time since, that there was great reason to suppose that the Cardinal de Rohan was a dupe. He was so to that impudent impostor Cagliastro, to whose lies he gave implicit credit. One circumstance affords a presumption in favor of the Cardinal's innocence, as well as a proof of his folly. When he was sent

* Mrs. Carter's opinion upon this subject agrees with that which Ben. Jonson expressed in a well known song beginning, "Still to be neat, still to be drest."

for

for to Court, he was so far from suspecting any misfortune, that he thought it was a summons to some great department in the State. All this I have upon very good authority; and from it, I think, may be collected, that the real cheats practised upon this weak man's credulity and foolish vanity, was to effect their own wicked purposes. I have been informed, though not from the same authority, that amongst his other impositions, Cagliastro pretended that he was supported by miracle. He lived so magnificently at Strasbourgh, that some people had the curiosity to examine at the bankers' shops to discover if he had any remittances; but none appeared, and it has since been ascertained, that he had got seventy-five thousand livres from the Cardinal.

I had not heard of the report of the marriage which you mention. I do not quite agree with you, that it is any security against such a union, that the parties cannot be impelled either by passion or reason. There is something or other which is neither passion nor reason, but what very sober heads might deem whim, which often leads people into measures at which the rest of the world are apt to wonder. I do not, however, insinuate this with regard to the point in question, for I do not believe the report. Indeed, I should be sorry to have any reason to think it is true, as Lady —— would appear

with less dignity by such an engagement, than in her present situation. We have lately had a very venerable match in this country. The gentleman lived with the lady and her husband during his life, and since his death (without the least reproach) and after twenty years are now married. The bride is sixty-eight.

Was not you shocked at the strange inhumanity of the wretches who robbed Mr. Mackey? Surely it will be very unjustifiable in any foreign state to give shelter to such demons. I hear that application has been made from hence to the French Court, and fair promises given; perhaps they may act as they did in the case of Clutterbuck, and try them by their own laws, which seems an odd proceeding. I see some obscure hints in the papers of a strange contention between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord George Gordon. Calling names puts me in mind of a note I lately read of Bishop Warburton on Mr. Pope's two lines,

Avidius and his wife, no matter which,
For him you'll call a dog, and her a b——.

Upon which the Bishop observes, that Mr. Pope "had the art of giving wit and dignity to his Billinsgate!" Now, would it not greatly puzzle any plain reader, to discover either the

wit or the dignity of calling a man and his wife a dog and a b——.

I hope your next letter will give me the pleasure of knowing you are perfectly free from your cold. I am, &c.

LETTER CCLX.

Deal, *July* 21, 1786.

Your letter, my dear friend, found me at Eastrey, where the east wind deforms the beauty of a very pleasant country, as much as it does your groves at Sandleford, and our cock-chaffers are as destructive to the leaves as your caterpillars. A western gale, and a good shower, which we every day expect, will drive away these destroyers, and restore the beauties of summer.

I have so great a respect for Lord Macartney's character, that I was very sorry to hear he had been engaged in so unwarrantable an affair as a duel. His courage had been so well proved, that

even upon the foolish and wicked popular notions of honor, one would think it could have suffered no impeachment by his refusing a challenge. His antagonist, whom you call Mr. Stuart, is, I believe, the famous General Stuart, who made so much noise in the world in the affair of Lord Pigot, and who, it is said, would have played the same game with Lord Macartney, if he had not been before-hand with him, and sent him home a prisoner. I suppose you must have read an account of the duel in the papers. What a sanguinary demon of vengeance must have possessed General Stuart, who wanted his Lordship to renew the fight, after he had been wounded! I am very glad he is likely to do well. What must his poor lady have felt who doats on him, when he was brought bleeding home!

You are certainly the best judge, but I should have thought that your calling at —— after it had been intimated you might, would have been kindly taken. There is no occasion on which people feel the attentions of their friends more gratefully, than in cases where misfortune is complicated with disgrace.

You had good courage to venture yourself into the heat and crowd of a visitation Charge. I do not doubt the excellence of the Bishop of Salis-

Salisbury's *, both from his talents and his virtues. His Lordship's episcopal conduct is very edifying. I have had the honor of many conversations with him, and I never once heard him say a single word that was not proper to be said by a Bishop. When such a regulated behaviour is accompanied and united with gentle and polite manners, it forms a character at once respectable and engaging, and which in his high situation must be looked up to with proper respect and veneration.

The trouble which you receive from the curiosity of people to see your improvements at Sandleford, is one of the natural *embarras des richesses*. Nobody plagues me by besieging my doors in carriages, and upon pillions to see my cottage. After all, however, it is very strange how people can be so impertinent. One would think they might at least suspend their impatient curiosity till you were absent.

I cannot think Mr. —— was drawn into a duel by any thing but his own folly. No gentleman I suppose would think his honor concerned to send a challenge to the pick-pocket who had sto-

* The present venerable and respectable Bishop of Durham, equally an ornament to the Bench in his episcopal capacity, and to his noble family, as a gentleman and a man of letters.

len

len his purse; and surely it is as little necessary to take such a step in the case of the worse profligate, who steals his neighbour's wife. In such circumstances the laws of what the world calls honor, are destitute even of the poor plea, that is sometimes alledged in their justification, that they are a remedy against such injuries, as do not fall under the cognizance of the laws of the land. But in the instance of adultery there is no such deficiency. The laws of the land have provided a punishment for it in this life, as the laws of God have armed against it the terrors of the next. I admired the decision of the court that awarded such very low damages, giving as a reason, that the husband had taken the law in his own hands, when he sent his challenge. It will be a good effect of this opinion, if it prevents one of the evils in such unhappy cases, the practice of duelling.

Lady Mary Coke has purchased Lord Ashburnham's house next to Lord Cremorne's at Chelsea. She has had a great deal of vexation and expence at Notting-hill, which, after all she has done, is tumbling down. One may venture to say of her new abode, that, in the style of Mr. Christie, she will have a most agreeable vicinage.

I hope Mr. Montagu will find great benefit from

from sea-bathing; I admire his prudence, and am very sure he will find its bracing and good effects more in the quiet and fresh air of a country village, than in the hot crowded rooms of a fashionable bathing place. It is grievous to observe how very much people counteract all the efficacy of natural remedies by the very unnatural mode of living which they follow during the time they are under their influence. What can be so contradictory as a dip in the fine fresh cold sea in the morning, and going into a hot crowded ball room at night; no good can ever come of it.

Our dear friends in Clarges-street are not yet gone to Tunbridge; to be sure she is more obstinate than any thing in nature, and yet one cannot be angry with her, poor soul, because she pleads her cause so well; at present they wait till Lord and Lady Cremorne return from Dublin. Good Mrs. Hancock's patience seems inexhaustible. I am sure you will lament the loss of good Mr. Burrows. His family are as well as can be hoped under so heavy an affliction. Most edifying was the lesson of patience and resignation which he gave them during his whole illness, and at its awful conclusion his behaviour was strictly conformable to those Christian principles which had regulated his life, and now soften the sorrows of his family. I am, my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLXI.

Deal, *November* 21, 1786.

What appearance a drawing room in a general mourning may make, I cannot tell; but a general mourning, in a Gothic Cathedral, is one of the most awful, solemn, and sublime spectacles I ever beheld; and if I had been in town at the late solemn ceremony, I believe I should have hazarded some days of head ache to have got a seat in the Abbey. I have been at two royal funerals, and both the scenery, and the sentiment, were unlike any I ever experienced on any other occasion. Perhaps you have heard what the Princess left Lady Templeton, if not, I can now tell you, as you wished to know. She had given her a legacy of 1000*l.* just after she came into her service, and she afterwards added another 1000*l.* as a mark of her gratitude, for Lady T's care and attention to her during her illness. It was very delicate and kind in our good King to save Lady Holdernesse the painful task of attending the funeral of her friend. She was very much attached

to

to the Princess; when in London they dined together twice in every week. The King, I am told, has, in every thing relating to the illness and the death of Princess Amelia, behaved with the greatest attention, propriety, and respect.

I rejoice that you spent your time so pleasantly in Bucks. I was once near West Wycombe, and if it is not so long ago, that I mistake a dream for a reality, there is something very remarkable in the situation of the Church; which formed one of the most romantic views I ever saw. The impression it made on my fancy, has certainly so far the effect of reality, that I have often wished to see it again. Pray tell me whether you were struck by this view. The company with whom I saw this, and several other places, were good kind of people; some of them had sense, some of them had knowledge, but none of them the least degree of imagination, and consequently so little indulgence for mine, that I was very seldom suffered, through the whole expedition, to indulge it in dwelling upon any object that happened to strike me. You will easily guess what a vexatious trial of patience such a situation must have been. One may enjoy the pleasures of imagination in a high degree, when the thoughts run delightfully, which they will do in absolute solitude; they

they are enjoyed in still greater perfection and extent with a companion of taste and spirit, who assists one to diversify every scene by placing it in more numerous points of view, and encreases its effect by new combinations of adventitious ideas. But all the powers of fancy are chained while one is engaged, by civil attention, to a society which considers all objects in no farther extent than merely as they strike the senses, and have no notion of any difference between the ruins of a fine Gothic castle, and a square brick house, the solemn music of a water fall, and the whetting of a saw.

It is indeed a melancholy truth, that people of remarkably strict conduct, are apt to exact too much from others, and often without any consideration of that infinite variety of circumstances, for which no doubt the universal and all righteous Judge will make that equitable and merciful allowance which wretched delinquents deny to each other. This severity of censure is probably one of the strongest temptations against which the eminently good ought to guard; and surely it would immediately vanish, if instead of that comparison which a latent pride induces them to make, between their own conduct, and that of others, the comparison was to be made where it ought to be,

between

between themselves and the rule of their duty *; and the attention would then be turned to a new object.

I have just heard from Mrs. Howe; she laments not having seen you since you came to town; but knowing you do not admit any body of a morning, she thought it in vain to make the attempt.

My accounts of Miss Dawson give me great anxiety. Lady Cremorne expresses herself in this great trial in a manner becoming that piety and resignation by which her whole conduct is uniformly governed. Never did I know a more amiable and interesting child than her sweet little girl. My heart aches for her parents; but God Almighty I trust will support them. Lady Cremorne's health, she writes me word, under all her fatigues and distress of mind, is perfectly good,

* And this is precisely the reason why humility is made by our Saviour, the foundation of the Christian religion. *Come unto me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* It is obvious that, if we found our hopes of acceptance with God upon comparison, we may compare ourselves with the very worst of men; and thus hope for salvation merely because we may not be housebreakers or murderers. If we must make comparisons in order to govern our conduct, it should be with those who are above us, not those who are beneath us, in moral and religious worth, and we should generally find abundant cause for humility.

which

which is a great blessing. God of his mercy preserve it so. With my very best wishes to your circle believe me, my dear friend, yours, &c.

LETTER CCLXII.

Deal, *June* 22, 1787.

By this time, my dear friend, I hope you are enjoying the music of your groves at Sandleford. The rough temper of the North-east wind, which is so disagreeably felt on our unsheltered coast, perhaps does not extend its influence to you, nor check the song of the nightingale. To us it gives nothing but a sullen sea, and dumb mackarel *.

Our journey, I thank God, was perfectly safe, and a safe journey is always a good thing. I left Mrs. Douglas at Eastrey, and came to my own

* Yet all Mrs. Carter's writings sufficiently prove that she was not ignorant of that bewitching power which could—"mutis quoque piscibus donatura cycni, si libeat, sonum."

home.

home. It is absolutely necessary to arrange my little affairs here, after so long an absence, and when that is accomplished, I hope to return to Eastrey for a few days again. I left our dear friends in Clarges-street much as usual. Mrs. Vesey talks in a pretty determined way of going to Tunbridge, as soon as Lady De Vesci, &c. leave London. She promises to drink the waters, and I can't help hoping they will do her good, and strengthen her nerves.

At my arrival here, I found a letter from Miss Conyers, with a very melancholy account of her brother*; she wrote to know the particulars of a case, which Mrs. Newton had mentioned to me, of a lady who was cured in the last stage of a decline by drinking tar water. Nothing, I fear, is likely to restore this poor young man; but in such a situation, it would be right to make the trial. Sweet Miss Dawson is still below the stars, but every hour expected to take her flight; God

* Third son of Mr. and Lady Harriet Conyers of Copthall in Essex; a young man of great promise, much regretted by his family and friends. Mrs. Carter was intimately acquainted with several branches of this respectable family, especially with the Lady of William Baker, Esq. of Bayfordbury, Herts, for whom she had a particular regard and esteem.

comfort

comfort the parents of these sufferers! The happiness of their children is secure.

Your welcome letter from Sandleford is just arrived, and I rejoice your journey was so pleasant. Though I do not offer any such affront to the tropical sun as you do, by sitting for warmth over blazing billets, I do not, however, pronounce it an unreasonable pleasure. To say truth, though I have kept myself tolerably well from petrifying during the day, I have literally sometimes been prevented from sleeping by the coldness of the night, which has been much more severe than any I felt during the winter. I did not see it, but have heard, there has, in this very month of June, been ice of a pretty considerable thickness. Yet the fields look prosperous to the highest degree, and, God be thanked, there is the finest prospect of a most plentiful crop of every kind of corn. The fruit has suffered, but this is of less consequence; though I grieve for the poor cottage children who are in danger of losing the wholesome luxury of their apple dumplings.

Have you read Sir John Hawkins's Life of Dr. Johnson? I have just finished it, and think it much less exceptionable than the other two. Indeed there are but very few passages that are likely to give pain to any one. His character of

Dr.

Dr. Johnson is impartially, and very decently and candidly, represented.

By a letter from London, I am informed, I hope truly, that the French court has given a pacific answer to our enquiries. In what a miserable distracted condition is Holland! Those who have no share in the public disturbances are greatly to be pitied. I believe the venerable good old Greffier to be one of the few real patriots. The Stadtholder would perhaps be a wiser, certainly a happier man, if he left these turbulent people to their own devices, and retired to his paternal inheritance.

I beg my compliments to Mrs. Scott, and will trouble you with a commission for her. Some years ago she subscribed half a guinea to the proposals of a translation by Mr. Nicolaides. He has not been able to procure subscriptions enough to print the book, and, therefore, very honestly offers to return the money. As I believe the poor man is by no means in affluent circumstances his honesty is the more respectable. He has left money with Mr. Douglas to pay every body, I beg therefore that you will mention it to any body you may see. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXIII.

Deal, *July* 23, 1787.

My dear Friend,

Both you and Mrs. Scott are very generous to the poor Greek; and I hope most of those on my list will follow your example. Indeed his honesty, in offering to return the money, is, I fear, a rare instance in such cases. I am always sorry for whatever brings subscriptions into disgrace.

I agree with you that it may be very blameable and contemptible for any person to abandon, for himself, and his posterity, a clear hereditary right. But I do not apprehend this to be absolutely the case in the present instance. At the first establishment of the Republic, the office in question was only occasional, like the dictatorship in Rome, and it never was hereditary, till, after strong contention it was made so in the life of the father of the present Stadtholder. What I meant was, where the point is in any degree disputable, a wise man would rather give it up than involve

involve himself in difficulties, and his country in bloodshed and confusion. In this view I have always looked upon Richard Cromwell as a much higher character than his father. I do not mean by this to make any comparison between Oliver, and the late Prince of Orange.

I heartily congratulate you on your fête for the poor Sunday children. It is an excellent institution; and, by the divine blessing, may produce a very considerable amendment in the rising generation. I believe you never could feel so pure a pleasure, from the most splendid entertainment you could give to the whole *corps diplomatique* in Portman-square, as what you receive from feasting and watching the improvement of these *élèves* in the school of virtue and religion.

There is, alas! too much cause for alarm in Mr. Dawson's health. Lord and Lady Cremorne set out for the Continent with him this week. God grant their expedition may prove successful. Change of climate did wonders in the case of Lord Winchelsea, and the Duchess of Rutland. I have the comfort of knowing that dear Lady Cremorne is extremely composed under this new trial. Under all these anxieties, it is happy for her friends to reflect how greatly her distinguished virtues and piety must entitle her to

the divine protection and support. Indeed they have the same kind of consolation with regard to Lord Cremorne.

We had a pretty long succession of distant thunder yesterday. What a terrible deal of mischief the late dread storms did in the neighbourhood of London! A friend of mine saw the coat of the poor man who was killed at Lambeth. There was a large hole in the sleeve, singed round the edges. It was with difficulty any mark could be discovered on the body; only a black spot scarcely bigger than the puncture of a pin. The shutters were closed in the room where his family was, and he unfortunately went into another for the sake of looking at the lightning.

Mr. Montagu was so good as to give me the pleasure of knowing that his lady and her little nursling were going on as well as possible, which quite rejoiced me, as she had suffered so much.

My friends from Eastrey are coming to spend the next week with me; in this increase of my small menage, it is rather untoward, that of my two servants, one is so ill, that she is ordered immediately to try her native air, and I will not allow her to defer it for a day on any account; so I must muddle on with the other, aided and abetted by

by a two-penny girl, as well as I can. Indeed I do not usually discompose myself for such inconsiderable *contretems*. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXIV.

Eastrey, *August* 30, 1787.

As your letter had no date, and no visible post mark, I know not when it was writ; but it followed me to this place, where I am come on a visit to my nephew, the Dr. and Mrs. Pennington being absent at Tunstal. I am endeavouring to mend my health by rambling about the environs of this sweet village. I believe I may have mentioned to you before, that it was once dignified by a palace of our Kentish kings. At about two miles distance, I believe was a temple of Woden, perhaps on the spot where now stands a building consecrated to a happier worship *. Near this

* The Church of Woodnesborough (quasi *Wodensborough*) near Sandwich.

place is a rough, shaggy mount, at the foot of which is a deep gloomy dell, in which, I am apt to fancy in my walks the miserable victims of a barbarous idolatry might be sacrificed. I wish you and your whiskey were here, I think I could furnish you with some most beautiful and delightful drives.

However strongly, my dear friend, your little grandson might grasp your finger, I believe he took, at least, an equally strong hold on your heart, which I hope he will retain as he grows up, by every instance of behaviour, that can give it pleasure. I am quite glad Mrs. M. Montagu has so well recovered all the trouble he gave her at his birth.

You will be glad to hear that the King, who has had many subjects of sorrow, is in the utmost joy at present, by the arrival of the Duke of York. In this the whole royal family share, and none more than the Prince of Wales. There is great gaiety at Windsor. A most magnificent entertainment for the Prince's birth day, two long tables in St. George's Hall, for forty persons each. The table for the King and Royal Family, on the steps before King William's picture. There was the same company with more dancers on the Duke of York's birth day. By those who immediately know the Duke, he is said to be very amiable;

amiable; and he certainly is held in high estimation abroad. His manners are, perhaps, not so engaging as those of his brother, for he is too reserved. But this probably will wear off by his continuance in this country, to which his long absence may have rendered him in some degree a stranger. The papers have carried Lady Holdernesse to Windsor; but she has been all the time quietly enjoying the prospect from Deal Castle, and not at all sorry to be out of the bustle.

The day before I left Deal, I saw a grandson of Mr. Fagel, who is an officer in the Dutch fleet, which stopt in the Downs. I asked him after the venerable good old Greffier, and he gave a very good account of his health. I mentioned to you a good while ago a transaction in the Downs, of a mutiny on board a Dutch East Indiaman, and Captain Langharne had in a very gallant manner seized the mutineers, and recovered the treasure, which they were carrying off in great triumph. A few days ago he received a letter from the Dutch ambassador, with a very handsome encomium on his behaviour, and an account that the states general had ordained him a present of a service of plate. The public disturbances in Holland are growing every day worse and worse. Perhaps twenty-five thousand men, whom the King of Prussia has ordered to march into the country in

the beginning of this month, may help to compose them. I heartily join with you in lamenting the situation of the amiable and patriotic old Greffier, who deeply feels the calamities of his country.

Lady Spencer is happily brought to bed of a daughter. The Dowager Lady Spencer was with her; it was the first time of her going to Althorp since the death of her Lord, and it was a very strong trial to all her tenderest feelings; but she is too good a Christian ever to let her own feelings interfere with what she thinks a duty. Mrs. Henry wrote me word that the meeting between her and her son was most truly affecting; for he fully appreciated the effort she had made in coming to them. Every trait one hears of her, makes her more and more estimable, and one cannot help hoping that the virtues of her son and his family, will bless the latter end of her life with happiness and comfort.

The latest accounts I have had of Mr. Dawson are by no means encouraging; he grows thinner and weaker, and his cough encreases. My heart aches every day for his dear and excellent parents; but the God whom they so faithfully serve, will no doubt support them, they mean to try the air of St. Germain, which I hear is remarkably fine, God give it a blessing.

Your

Your account of our dear Mrs. Vesey grieves me beyond measure. It is sad to think she should make any addition to her unavoidable sufferings by fretfulness and impatience. But much allowance is due where the mind is weakened by bodily disorders, and rendered incapable of exerting itself by the application of those principles, which can alone enable it to submit with calmness and resignation to the condition and sufferings of mortality. Dr. Douglas seems to think it is the gout she has; I could almost say I wish it was, because I think that disorder, though bad to bear, might do her good in other respects. All health and happiness attend you and your family party, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXV.

Deal, *September* 30, 1787.

My dear Friend

" My poor atmospherical constitution has indeed felt the effect of the late equinoctial bustle. However

However I ought, upon the whole, to be very well contented with our capricious climate, since I should be mighty sorry to exchange it for any other beneath the sun.

I am at present less disconcerted by the turbulence of the elements, than by the political storms raised by the Princes of the earth, and which are, by far, more mischievous than all the natural evils of life. Some people, however, of whose judgment I have a very high opinion, think that, after all this bustle and to do, there will not be any war. The preparations for it I hear are carrying on with very great activity, which I suppose is a very necessary precaution. The finances of our neighbours are indisputably in a most wretched state. Much of the distress is ascribed to Mr. de Calonne, who is said to have suffered the sums appropriated to public uses, to be intercepted by the extravagance of some of the greatest personages (except the King) in the French court.

You have doubtless read in the papers of the joy with which the Prince of Orange was received at the Hague. The account was not the least exaggerated, as I know from a private letter. The *soi disant* patriots surely have made a most contemptible figure. Probably they depended too much on the assistance of their good allies the French.

I had

I had a letter a few days ago from Miss A. Clarke, giving a very good account of dear Mrs. Vesey, who is getting much better. My last accounts of poor Mr. Dawson, leave me but very little hope of his recovery, it will be a sad, sad stroke on his dear parents, come when it will, though it has been so long expected. Mrs. Fielding is going in November to Paris, where she proposes to spend five or six months. Mr. St. John is going to be married to Lady Mary Kerr, third daughter to Lord Lothian. The match may be very happy, as I hear the young people are very much attached, if they can live poetically, or reasonably, on love in a cottage. His fortune is only fifteen thousand pounds, and she has not any thing. Now for people in their line of life this is absolute starvation. I am glad your little grandson goes on so prosperously, and am, my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLXVI.

Deal, *October* 19, 1787.

YES indeed, my dear friend, I have sometimes found that one may want leisure for doing what one wishes to do, in the retirement of the country, as well as in the bustle of the town. Much more must you find this want, whose avocations in every place are so frequent, that I believe if you were to be transported to the wilds of Africa, or fixed on the Peak of Teneriffe, you would find out more employment, than even your extensive powers could find hours enough to execute.

I am glad to hear that Mrs. Trimmer's excellent schemes to promote the industry, and consequently the virtue and happiness of the poor, are encouraged by the inspection and approbation of their majesties. Mrs. Trimmer is really a blessing to society. I knew her father, who was a sensible and good man. His daughter inherits his understanding and his piety; may it please God to avert

avert from her that miserable debility of constitution, which, for some years before his death, confined him to the exercise of merely passive virtues. Mr. Kirby understood no language except his own; but his mind was stored with the greatest variety of information of any person without learning, that I ever knew.

Have you seen Madame de Sillery's last book on religion? I have as yet read only a small part of it; of this, some passages are very good, others appear to me improper and injudicious. If you have read the book, be so good as to tell me your opinion of it. Mrs. Harcourt * is come to this place to bathe in the sea; and Mrs. Johnstone is soon expected. I am told the Governor has not left her by any means in affluent circumstances; perhaps it was not in his power, or probably he would have provided amply for her, as, by all accounts she attended him with the most unwearied care, during his long and dreadful illness. Mr. Pulteney has, I hear, very generously settled a hundred a year on Miss Dee, Mrs. Johnstone's sister.

I believe it is since I wrote to you last, that Major Vesey called on me. He was just going

* Now Countess of Harcourt. Mrs. Johnstone afterwards married the late Admiral Nugent.

on

on board to join his regiment at Halifax. He gave me a most melancholy account of our poor dear friend; he said she was always in tears. What a sad situation for her excellent and affectionate friend! Society I hope will bring them some relief in winter.

Have you seen number thirteen of the Olla Podrida? The subject is Doctor Johnson, and it is, I think, an exceeding pretty paper *. Do pray read it. I beg you will likewise read the "History of Miss Greville," both for the sake of the work, and of the author Mrs. Kiers, who has an excellent character. She wrote "Interesting Memoirs," which you liked upon the whole. You will, I believe, think this last work very superior to her first attempt. It is dedicated to Lady Glasgow, who is very much interested for her.

From the best intelligence I can procure, I am strongly inclined to hope that all this bustle will end in peace. I honor the spirit of our ministry, however, in their active preparations for war. Have you seen Mons. de Calonne's pamphlet? I have just read it. I do not find that he makes

* It is understood to have been written by the late Bishop Horne; a most amiable and exemplary Prelate, uniting in his character the simplicity of the early Christian ages, to genius, piety, and learning.

any

any new discoveries of the disorders of the finances, he seems to have been very ill treated. The poor man seems to wish heartily that he was to be tried by an English jury; I suppose he will never venture to return to France, nor indeed, if this work be true, has he any right to expect a favorable reception. However natural it might be for him to endeavour to vindicate his own character, it should have been done privately to his master, without exposing the weak state of his country to all Europe.

The Princess of Orange is indeed a truly great character. She was so universally esteemed in Holland, that it has been said, she might have entirely governed it, if she would have assumed a power, which she judged inconsistent with the duties of a woman and a wife. Pray, my dear friend, do not name her again in the same line, with one who rebelled against her Sovereign, and murdered her husband. It was fortunate for the Stadtholder that the Princess was treated in so scandalous a manner. It is thought the King of Prussia would never have taken an active part, but to revenge the personal insult offered to his sister.

I have said nothing yet of the subject nearest my heart. You have, I suppose, read in the papers the death of dear Mr. Dawson. You will imagine,

imagine, knowing how well and truly I love Lord and Lady Cremorne, what I must feel for my poor dear afflicted friends *. The God of all consolation, I trust, will support them. In such distresses as those with which they have so long been tried, all human assistance is of no avail.

I am glad you had the pleasure of seeing the Primate in so comfortable a state of health; and that the little stranger thrives so prosperously.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXVII.

Deal, *November* 22, 1787.

SUNSHINE and gentle gales! my dear friend! in what temperate region do you find

* Those who were acquainted with Mrs. Carter know that this warm friendship never suffered the least diminution on either side. Lord Cremorne has been long gone to receive the reward of his virtues, but not before the kind and constant attention of himself, and his excellent lady, had been one of the greatest comforts of Mrs. Carter's declining years.

them?

them? With us for a long time all has been deluging rain, and violent winds, with very little intermission. So that I can get no exercise, nor very little air but what is half water. However we are just now in a calm. It is true the wind whistles, and the waves roar, but this is nothing to what we had on Thursday night, rain, hail, thunder, and a most tremendous uproar of winds. The Dover packets were driven into the Downs. I heard an affecting account of a lady, who was one of the passengers. As soon as she was landed, she fell on her knees, on the beach, in thankfulness for her preservation, and then fainted away. It was indeed a most fearful storm even on dry land.

I hope I may congratulate you on a prospect of peace. A war would at least be as inconvenient to our neighbours as to ourselves. Their finances are in a very perplexed state, and their people very discontented. I agree with you that the Grand Monarque will find enough to do in his own dominions. One sad instance of the bad state of their finances, is, that all the new Louis d'ors are under weight. One should pity their popular discontent, if it could be supposed to arise from any longing after virtuous liberty, which is regulated by the wisdom of laws. But probably theirs is only a wild kind of effervescence

vescence which has been caught from the wicked writings of those wretches their *philosophes*, who have been so long labouring to set mankind free from all restraints, human and divine. Perhaps too the French cabinet may find that no great advantage has been gained to the political system, by the wonderful zeal for the *liberties* of America and Holland.

My nephew * is just returned from a six weeks tour on the Continent. He was astonished at the manner in which some of the French officers talked to him, who was a stranger, of their King and Queen. Our factious abuse here is quite civil and gentle compared with the scandalous terms these gentlemen made use of. The French cabinet took part with the Americans in this zeal for *liberty;* perhaps they may now find more of the spirit among their own people than they would wish. Indeed as far as one can judge from their writings, and from report, they

* The Editor's elder brother, who from mixing very much with the natives at this and other times, when on the Continent, and observing the great difference in their language in speaking on political subjects, from what it formerly was, was fully persuaded that some dreadful convulsion in the state was at hand. See a great many curious observations upon this subject, in the interesting work before mentioned, "Pennington's Continental Tours."

seem

seem to have some general and confused ideas and notions of liberty, fluttering about their giddy heads, which, whether it fixes to any concerted plan or not, may give their governors some trouble and confusion by the fermentation. Amongst other places, my nephew was at Strasbourg. The people there expressed great regard for the Cardinal de Rohan, their Archbishop, and very much wished for his return. He lived there in very great magnificence. But his popularity cost him dear, if it was acquired by the ruin of his affairs, for he is said to be terribly in debt. Mr. Pennington is extremely pleased with his excursion which carried him as far the Glaciers.

You say that two great personages are going to be separated. In the true spirit of contradiction, *I* say they will not separate. Their *menage* indeed is sufficiently uncomfortable. The husband is weak and vicious, the wife has a most outrageous temper, and these to be sure are mighty good ingredients towards making up a separation. Yet it will not, I firmly believe, be effected; for the lady will bear any thing rather than quit her present situation, so it must be an act of compulsion if she leaves it. Her significance in the union is not very great, but it would dwindle to nothing if she was parted.

Your account of our dear Mrs. Vesey is a very melancholy one, yet from what I had heard before, I could hardly expect a better. It is a comfort, however, that she is not always equally lost to herself and her friends, but is sometimes very tolerably collected. That state, no doubt, is sadly different from that in which we have been so long accustomed to enjoy her delightful society, but we must now be thankful if she remains as she is. When Lord Spencer's house was burnt down, she was always wishing with great earnestness that they would employ her to contrive a new one, as she understood it was to be in the cottage style. This she used to talk of to every body, even to the family, to my great distress. You know what a passion she had for this kind of amusement. Debilitated as her faculties are, I cannot help thinking, that, if some employment of this kind was to offer itself to her imagination, her charming genius would still be capable of exerting itself with its usual spirit. I knew a physician now dead, who was disordered in his senses; yet, on the subject of his profession, would discourse as clearly, and might have been as safely trusted, as when his mind was in the soundest state.

All whom I have ever heard mention Miss Dee, speak of her very highly, and I should think her perfectly

perfectly qualified for the situation in which she is placed, and I doubt not she will fulfil the difficult duties of it with that integrity and honor that the trust deserves. Miss Pulteney had no need of any train of servants when you met her going to Bath, for she stayed there only one day. Her business was to see the scite and plan of a new town which is to be formed on building leases on her estate there. There is to be a most magnificent square, to be called Frances Square (from her mother's name), and it is intended to be as large as Lincoln's Inn Fields.

All my dear Eastrey friends are coming to spend some time with me; as soon as they are gone, I shall employ myself in arranging all my little affairs, which will take me some time, so that I shall not be in London till after Christmas. The multiplicity of your avocations will scarcely begin before that time, so that our dear Mrs. Vesey will have the comfort of your society more frequently than she could afterwards, and then I shall be ready as well as I can, to supply your deficiences.

Not long since I dined with a gentleman * in this

* The late Dr. Backhouse, Rector of Deal, and Archdeacon of Canterbury; a gentleman much respected for learning, general knowledge, and hospitality. As an

 Archdeacon,

this neighbourhood, at whose table the colour and appearance of a set of salt-cellars attracted the curiosity of the company. He smiled and said, they were at least venerable for their antiquity, as the materials of which they were composed were above 1800 years old. He then told us that they were made out of a piece of Roman brick, which he had procured from the ruins of Richborough Castle. He had judiciously adapted their fashion to their original place. The upper edges were embattled, and they were formed into the appearance of an old square fortress. He diverted us with a dialogue which he had with the person whom he employed to manufacture his Roman prize. The man objected very much to the hardness of the materials, "but Sir," says he, "I have some nice, soft, red brick at home, "which will look a deal prettier, and will not

Archdeacon, he was singularly useful to, and regretted by, his clergy. His table was always open to them, he was always ready to give them his assistance and advice, and no man was better acquainted with the laws and duties relating to his important station than he was. His nephew, after one incumbency, succeeded him in the Rectory of Deal; of whom the Editor would gladly say more, but in the commendation of a living friend, however beloved and valued by himself, and esteemed by all who know him, he dares not indulge his pen.

"spoil

"spoil my tools." Does not this remind one of the Roman general, (was it not Mummius?) who told his soldiers, if they purloined any of the bronze statues of a conquered town, they should pay him their weight in brass *.

I see Sir E. Impey is to be the next object of parliamentary enquiry. Very exemplary ought his punishment to be, if the charges brought against him are made good; and *vice versa*, if I had my will, which would be one great point gained, against evil reports being raised, which the raisers cannot substantiate. Adieu, my dear friend.

* Mummius was the General of whom this anecdote is related, which occurred at the capture of Corinth. A similar story is told of him also, with regard to the pictures which he took the s: yet "hinc prima mali labes;" the wealth and works of art brought from Corinth, first introduced luxury into Rome.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

Deal, *June* 30, 1788.

My dear Friend,

It must have been very pleasant indeed to entertain two such guests, of so much merit, and so agreeably drest. Such apparitions, though they vanish so soon, leave a very pleasant remembrance behind them.

Within this week my strength, I thank God, has returned amazingly, and I have quite recovered my appetite, and the power of reading. Moreover my own natural head-ache is returned after five weeks absence, and very glad I was to receive it, in the room of that most outrageous pain which had taken its place.

I know not who the episcopal lady is who has given the *fête* you mention. The choice of the company strongly implies that she is not the wife of a very episcopal lord. Such an encouragement of profligate characters is particularly scandalous in high dignitaries in the Church. It is indecent and unchristian-like in all.

I do

I do indeed rejoice in the decided part which Mr. Pitt has taken in favor of the poor oppressed negroes. I rejoiced still more on the general tendency of his speech, and his noble rejection of all paltry considerations of particular interest, and reducing the question to the simple point of right or wrong. If he makes this principle the constant rule of his conduct, he will be the most truly patriotic minister that this nation has ever known, for it is the only principle on which either individual or public happiness can ever be secured.

I was glad to find that you were pleased with the "Orphan of the Castle." I heartily wish it was fashionable enough to be of any essential benefit to the author, who has been obliged to purchase her freedom from a vile husband, by giving up part of the little fortune she had left; so that she has at present little more than a hundred a year to support herself and six or seven children.

When you saw Mrs. Boscawen, I think she could not avoid telling you, of the account which she had had of the discovery of above five hundred of Madame de Sevigné's letters, which were lately found in repairing the Chateau de la Garde. I am told that some judges, of very respectable authority, give no credit to this story,

and

and yet from the manner in which it was communicated to her, it had every mark of authenticity! If it proves true, the *trouvaille* must be delightful. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXIX.

Deal, *July* 20, 1788.

YOUR Sunday-school feast, my dear friend, must have been not only a joyous holiday to the children, but a most delightful entertainment to yourself, and you were more enviable when you were surrounded by these innocent objects of your liberality, than in the most brilliant assembly of the finest people of the world.

I had not read the account you mention of the primate, but am happy to find he is so far recovered as to talk of undertaking a voyage to Ireland; it must be a great satisfaction to you, as at one time you seemed to despair of his ever going there again.

I guessed, though you did not tell me at first, the

the president of the episcopal card party; for that lady had before done so many unepiscopal things that she was not easily mistaken. However, to say the truth, most great assemblies are become sufficiently scandalous. The contemptible baseness of people in high rank, of inviting the most profligate and abandoned women in compliment to the infamous attachment of their dissolute admirers, is a species of corruption that must make every sober mind shudder; and a serious Christian can scarcely think the frequenting such societies consistent with the spirit of the Gospel. What a dreadful school of profligacy is not only the house you mention, but the fashionable world in general! All do not fall indeed in the same manner as poor Mrs. ———, for all have not the same strong passions. But gambling, extravagance, neglect of domestic order, the inversion of day and night, and the hurry of perpetual crowds, are equal disqualifications for all serious attention to the duties of an accountable life. Indeed the very mixing all kind of characters together has a fatal tendency. It helps to destroy that secondary aid to virtue, a regard to reputation, and it contributes to weaken, even in good minds, that distinction between right and wrong conduct, which it is of infinite importance to themselves and to society, to preserve with the strictest care. I had hoped

hoped that retirement, reflexion, and the gentle and compassionate care and admonitions of the tender friend, to whom it was said this unfortunate young woman had fled, might have brought her to repentance, and intitled her to the forgiveness of a merciful and all-gracious God, and to the reconciliation of her family, and in time to the comforts of private society, though her faulty conduct would exclude her from the world; but into what is called the world no true penitent would ever have the effrontery to try to enter; but alas! all these hopes are now done away with, and she must for life hide herself.

I am sorry for the robberies of your poor tenants in the North. God be thanked we have had no misfortune or terror of this kind in this place. I do not think the London servants are by any means more wicked than others. On the contrary it seems rather a matter of surprise that of such a number, so few should be notoriously bad. When it is considered to what disorderly examples they are constantly witnesses, the absolute neglect of all instruction from their superiors, and the very little time allowed them for gaining instruction by any other means, it is very happy upon the whole that they give so little disturbance to human society. I am told the miserable wretch who robbed Devonshire-house, was

brought

brought up in Lord Spencer's family, which it seems has distressed good Lord Spencer sadly. I find that the Duke has found his diamond George, which was *mislaid* and not *stolen*. The family are making every exertion to save the thief from capital punishment. This is for their honor, as there are very few cases in which humanity can support the thoughts of consigning a fellow creature to death. Some severe punishment however, it is to be hoped, will be inflicted on this unhappy wretch, for much of the comfort of life must be lost, if people were to live under the apprehension of being robbed by those who live under their own roof; which must be the case, if those who were ill inclined thought that that circumstance would prevent their condemnation to death.

I am informed there is great reason to believe that Lord Hood will be the sitting member. It is affirmed that only one person was killed in the riots. However this be, the proceedings at the election were certainly very disorderly, and gave great disturbance to quiet and peaceable people; and it seems well worth the attention of the legislature to prevent any such things happening in future.

Dowager Lady Spencer is at St. Albans, indefatigable in the care of her Sunday-schools, which

which consist of a hundred and sixty girls, and succeed extremely well; indeed how can it be otherwise, when a person of her rank, whose example is followed by a great many ladies in her neighbourhood, attend so strictly, and give what is of much more consequence even than their money, their time, to these poor children.

The last accounts I had of our dear Mrs. Vesey were very melancholy, she was staying with Lady Cremorne, whose spirits, poor soul, are very unfit for exertion, but whose Christian fortitude and resignation enables her to do what she thinks is right. The painted glass particularly attracts Mrs. Vesey's notice, and when she sees it, her admiration, her flights of fancy and brilliancy of expression are almost equal to her best days, but then she again sinks into despondency, and will scarce utter a word; my heart-achs while I write of her, for never can I forget what she has been.

We had yesterday the most tremendous storm I ever witnessed, about ten o'clock there was one flash of lightning, and one clap of thunder, both of them most awful, and followed by an astonishing weight of rain, mixed with hail, about the size of peas. My house did not suffer from it, but the lower part of the town was presently two feet deep in water, and in some places much more; quite

quite at the north end, they could only move in boats, and a very great deal of damage it has done to many families, whose ground-floors were filled, and their furniture floating about. The tempest was so local, that no effect of it appeared beyond the town.

Mr. Fector of Dover, has an order to stop all the Swedish East Indiamen, who come this way, and to inform them of the war between Sweden and Russia. What mad spirit of discord has again possessed these Northern princes! Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXX.

Deal, *October* 4, 1788.

My dear Friend,

This tempestuous weather has been as unfavorable for my walks as for your whisky. I hope when this equinoctial tumult is over, we may yet have some gentle autumnal days. Indeed I should not much regret the weather, if, when it prevents my rambling out of doors, it would

would suffer me to employ myself at home. But I am such a plaything of the elements, that my head is sadly affected by their turbulence.

Lady Holdernesse seems to think that the last attempt in Holland is of very little consequence. Nobody appears to be concerned in it, but a Mons. de Villates, and an inn-keeper. Whatever the design was, the Dutch government, by getting possession of the papers, will be guarded against it.

Did I mention to you that I am at present engaged in reading Mademoiselle Keralio's History of Queen Elizabeth? It is I think admirably well written; and the style perfectly free from that affectation which so strongly characterises almost every other French writing of the present times. Mademoiselle Keralio is a very strong advocate for the innocence of Mary Queen of Scots, for which she produces innumerable authorities. She has an amazing extent of historical knowledge, and seems to have considered her subject with the utmost diligence and care. Probably her free access to the Scotch College at Paris, may have given her opportunities of seeing many original unpublished papers. *Aprôpos* of the Scotch College, though not of Mademoiselle Keralio. Among the papers there is, I think, a letter from our King James the Second, containing advice

to

to his son the Pretender. In this he mentions how very much his brother was hurt by his attachment to women, by whom he was most shockingly deceived; and that the Duke of Monmouth was not his son. He adds, that he himself had been too faulty in the same way, and warns his son to beware of such *cattle*. Do you recollect in any history, seeing that the Duke of Monmouth's mother, was ever suspected of a criminal connection with any other than the King?

We have just lost our worthy Rector, the Archdeacon of Canterbury, poor man he has for some time been a dreadful sufferer; he will be much missed, for he was much beloved; he was hospitable and kind to the clergy, and at all times ready to attend to their concerns *.

Probably you have long since read Mons. Necker's book, on the "Influence of Religion on "Government." So far as I have gone the principles are most excellent, and common sense and experience of the world, bear the fullest testimony to his assertions. The style is not perfectly free from French affectation. I cannot help differing from you in your opinion about Mons. Necker. Noble

* This is the Gentleman who was mentioned in a former note, and of whom neither his parishioners, nor the clergy, ever spoke without respect.

birth,

birth, high rank, and shining talents, do not seem necessary qualifications for his department. Plain common sense, sobriety of life, and a patient unwearied application to business, I suppose, forms a much more able financier, than genius or titles. If Sully had possessed the vivacity of his master, he would never have extricated him out of his difficulties. Sully, no doubt, was a very great man, *mais il avoit la tête un peu Suisse*, and that both furnished Henry with a dinner, and saved the nation. My best regards to your family circle, and believe me to be yours, &c.

LETTER CCLXXI.

Deal, *December* 8, 1788.

This severe weather I hope, my dear friend, has not had any bad effect on your health. I congratulate you on the domestic happiness and delight you experienced with your friends at Shooter's Hill. Alas! I fear you will feel but little comfort from the situation of public affairs.

We

We have for some time seen the fairest prospects opening on our country, and its government conducted with an appearance of integrity and attention to its interest and glory, beyond any example within our memory, or perhaps in the ages before it. And now we are threatened with the danger of being thrown into the hands of unprincipled harpies. I will say no more for fear of saying too much. All the consolation is that we are in the hands of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and whether we are preserved for a monument of his goodness, or chastised for our offences, as an example of his justice, all his councils are founded in wisdom and mercy, and to all who properly rely on him, every final event must be happy.

You will have better opportunities at present of receiving intelligence of our most amiable unhappy sovereign, than I can tell you. You will feel a melancholy pleasure, I am sure, in knowing, what perhaps you may not have heard, that in the midst of the sad derangement of his head, he preserves all the virtues of his heart; and constantly discovers a love of truth, a love of his country, piety, and every good thing; so that if it please God to restore him, those about him will look up to him more than ever they did. I copy this affecting account from an information which I have received, and on which I can absolutely depend.

Dr. Addington told the Queen that, though he would not absolutely assert it, he had the strongest hopes of the King's recovery.

All who feel for their country must be very anxious to hear the result of the debates of this important week, on which, in all human views, the fate of the nation seems to depend. May God direct our councils for our truest advantage, in this season of uncommon perplexity and distress!

Since I wrote to you I have gone through M. Necker's "Importance des Opinions Religieuses," and found it a most respectable work. Happy will it be for the French nation if he founds his political system on such principles as he discovers in his book! I was sorry that M. Necker had employed so many chapters on the confutation of atheism, an absurdity which so glaringly confutes itself. But probably he might think it necessary in a country where a set of wretches who dignify themselves by the title of philosophers, have so long been endeavouring to quench the light of the human understanding, to confound all the principles of morality, and to stifle all the natural feelings of the heart.

What an enormous robbery at Lambeth! surely watchful care of the legislature is necessary to prevent such audacious invasions of pro-

perty. In Archbishop Secker's time, the inhabitants of Lambeth Palace were not fewer than forty, and probably are now rather more than less. I heartily wish the villains may be discovered. Our laws, in most cases of robbery, are too severe; but house breakers are a species of rogues who should never be spared. One is authorized to make this distinction by the injunction of a divine law. If that law, in cases of robbery, was to be universally adopted, we should most likely, I believe, have much fewer thieves. The punishment of working till they had made full restitution, inflicted as it ought to be, without any mitigation, would be much more formidable than the dread of hanging, which, from many circumstances, the worst rogues have so many chances of escaping.

My dear Eastrey friends have been with me some time; they leave me on Saturday next; I shall then set about arranging my little domestic matters, in preparation for coming to London, and to those friends I so dearly love, the foremost of whom you, my dear friend, stand, which you will easily believe without any further assurances from

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLXXII.

Eastrey, *June* 13, 1789.

You judge very rightly, my dear friend, when you suppose I feel a joy, when after some months absence, I return to my own little abode. I feel likewise great thankfulness, when after such an interval, no melancholy change has happened to lessen the enjoyment either of that, or any other of the various blessings by which the Almighty has graciously surrounded me. The pleasures arising from being in the country must wait till the weather changes, for it is more like November than June. *Mais le bon tems reviendra;* and, in the mean time, I enjoy the society of my friends here, who all join in best respects to you; I am, I assure you, the stoutest of the party.

While the great and the rich have been wearying their spirits, and ruining their health by late hours and splendid entertainments, your guests have enjoyed unmixed pleasure in a plentiful temperate

temperate meal, and a reasonable cheerful relaxation from the labours of useful industry, and a kind of exquisite delight never experienced by those to whom amusement is a toilsome business. Indeed I was often severely hurt by seeing some, whom I esteem and love, declining in their health, and squandering away excellent talents, by not having resolution enough to resist being carried away by the torrent of fashionable dissipation.

Since I came from town I have received an account of the death of my dear and excellent friend Mrs. Raby Vane. Never, I believe, was a human soul more constantly prepared for a sudden call into eternity. The remarkable sanctity of her life, the sweetness of her temper, the elegance of her understanding and accomplishments, and the politeness of her manners, rendered her example a model for improvement, and her conversation a delight to all who had the happiness of intimately knowing her. It pleased God to remove her from the world without the least pain or struggle in the passage. She had, according to her constant practice, been reading prayers to her servants; and at the conclusion of this act of devotion, sunk down in a fit, and was in an instant transported into the immediate presence of Him, to whom she had the moment before been address-

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ing her prayers. How blessed was such a conclusion of such a life!

Your visit must be a great consolation to the Primate. It is a great happiness that in his suffering state, ease is to be had, even at the price of such a confinement. It certainly requires a true Christian spirit of resignation for a mind so active as that of his Grace, to bear with cheerfulness such an impediment to his exertions. But he must find much consolation in reflecting on a long life so usefully spent, that even if he was not obliged to it, by the state of his health, he might very allowably at his great age, indulge in a repose from his labours.

I find Mrs. Ord has lost her mother. The loss of a good parent must be felt at all ages. But the very little chance of finding any pleasure in living on after ninety-six, must, I should think, soon administer comfort and consolation for the departure of ever so dear a friend. Her death was caused by the breaking of a blood vessel in coughing, so it was both easy and speedy, which, to a mind well prepared, must be a great comfort.

I beg your pardon for not having sooner thanked you for Dr. Darwin's poem; how provoking it is that he should have lavished away such beautiful

beautiful verses upon a subject in which it is impossible to feel interested *.

We had a most tremendous storm last Sunday while the people were all at chapel, where there was the greatest perturbation, and confusion of squalling, running out, &c. &c. The great occasion of terror, I believe, was the apprehension of being crushed. The roof of our chapel has for some time been in a dangerous state, and it is so constructed, that if it gives way, the whole building must fall with it. God be thanked no mischief has happened, and it is now under repair. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER CCLXXIII.

Deal, *July* 13, 1789.

It did indeed grieve my heart, my dear friend, to read the decision of the committee

* The event seems to have proved the justness of Mrs. Carter's criticism. Perhaps no other modern poem, in which any talent at all is distinguishable, has sunk into such speedy and complete oblivion.

against

against sending to our poor starving neighbours the relief they asked. I am persuaded, however, the denial was from some necessary reasons; for we have never, with all our faults, appeared to be an ungenerous, or a hard-hearted people; and if any credit is to be given to the accounts in the papers, France appears to be in a most shocking situation. If it be true that the army refuses to act, the struggle will probably be soon over, for what other support than an army has absolute power? I see in the St. James's Chronicle, that Lord Elgin is quoted by name, for a particular account of the distractions in France. If this is done without his Lordship's permission, it is taking a most strange liberty, or rather an unjustifiable one, for the liberties our news writers take with every body's name is too frequent to be wondered at. I am only astonished that some public notice is not taken of it. Yet this paper is the most moderate and decent of any I know.

I rejoice in your account of Miss More's sweet retirement of Cowslip Green. It would do one good in any case to see distinguished talents, and sublime virtue, placed in an advantageous situation; but when it is the lot of a friend one so highly esteems and loves, it is exquisite pleasure.

My

My nephew * is just returned from a tour through the south of France; he was at Geneva, where he saw Prince Edward. Mr. Pennington says the same unfavourable weather accompanied him all over the Continent through which he passed, as we have had here.

I have frequent accounts of the good health and spirits of our amiable sovereign, and of the demonstrations of joy loyalty, and affection, which he meets with wherever he passes. The love of his people will, I am sure, console him for many vexations, and disappointments, and he, by his virtues, deserves all the blessings it may please God to bestow on him.

Mrs. and Miss H. Bowdler, I hear, are going to Teignmouth to Miss Bowdler. Poor Lady Herries went there, before I left London, to visit her sister, whose long sufferings have terminated in her death. She was much younger than Lady Herries, who always looked on her as her child, and was extremely fond of her. The last letter I had from dear Lady Cremorne gave me a better account of her health; she is staying with Lady Wake, till Lord Cremorne returns from Ireland. My best compliments to Mrs. M. Montagu, and I am, &c.

* The Editor's elder brother, whose travels have been mentioned before.

LETTER CCLXXIV.

Deal, *October* 5, 1789.

HAVE you, my dear friend, read Mrs. Piozzi's Travels? The book did not fall in my way till very lately. It was particularly pleasant to me during my illness, when I could not apply to any reading that required much attention. It is writ with spirit, acuteness, and much sensible observation. The style is sometimes elegant, sometimes colloquial and vulgar, and strangely careless in the grammatical part, which one should not expect from the writer's classical knowledge, which is very considerable, and which she applies very happily in many parts of her work. She sometimes puts me out of humour, by her being so vexatiously desultory. When she has led her readers to a building, which from its outside they are all impatience to enter, and wait for her to introduce them, away she whisks (do not you see her) and leaves them staring and wondering what is become of her. I felt this particularly with regard

gard to the Cathedral at Milan, which was an object of great curiosity to me. One circumstance is highly to her honor, that she always mentions religion with the deepest reverence, and piety of expression. Do tell me if you have read this book, and whether you agree with me about it?

Another of my studies has been M. Anquetil's "Louis XIV, sa Cour et le Regent," which rather disappointed me. I think there was no one anecdote but what I had read before in other *memoires*, and some of them much better told. I find however it is a fashionable book; but it appears to me much less entertaining than any I have read by the same author. I felt obliged to him however for sometimes giving a rap to the abominable caustic genius of St. Simon. No, I never have, nor ever will, forgive what he says of Fenelon.

We have, I believe, a considerable number of French exiles in England, but they are much more numerous in Switzerland. They came in such crowds one night that they were obliged to be billeted like soldiers. Mrs. Trevor, who was going to meet her husband, one of our ministers at Lausanne, was in danger of being torn in pieces by the populace at Besançon, because they took her for the Duchess of Polignac; they confined her for four hours before they would allow her

her even to show her passport. Most of the *chateaux* round Lyons are destroyed. The poor Duchess of Bourbon was confined at Dijon, but found means to effect her escape. What will be the conclusion of all these violent proceedings? Very great indeed must be the general and permanent good of the present Revolution, if it compensates for all the disorders and miseries of such a distracted state of confusion and anarchy as now prevails in this unhappy kingdom. The behaviour of the populace is as savage as it was in the worst of times, and reminds one of all the horrors during the captivity of their king John, and the insanity of Charles the VIth; and it is much more inexcusable now, as there is not the provocation of the same oppressive measures.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXXV.

Deal, *December* 1, 1789.

I PERFECTLY agree with you, my dear friend, as to the foolish farces which are exhibit-

ing

ing by the National Assembly. It would be well if they had not too often a mixture of deep tragedy in them. These philosophic patriots, however, seem to think the whole drama a very facetious subject. That terrible day when the Queen was *presque egorgée;* when the king was led into Paris like a slave, preceded by the heads of his murdered guards; when a musket was fired into one of the Queen's coaches, that day M. Bailly, called *un beau jour*, and the egregious M. de Mirabeau and M. Barnave were laughing with each other, while streams of blood were running around them. Monsieur escaped by a miracle from nineteen assassins, who had doomed his head an additional trophy. These particulars, and many more I could add, were not from public papers, but are copied from a letter of M. Lally from Neufchatel, dated Oct. 31. The horrors to which he was witness, and the utter impossibility he found of doing any good, made him determine to quit the National Assembly, *et janer de ne plus mettre le pied dans ce caverne d'antropophages.*

In what will all this violence and wickedness end? Perhaps in some important good. Villains by doing the dirty work, which the virtuous will not do, and which may in a corrupted world be necessary to clear away the obstructions which

lie

lie in the road to some great public benefit, become instruments of the reasonable change and reformation which they never intended. Thus, by the over-ruling Providence of God, from the chaos of human passions emerges a system of order and good government. Surely people must have a marvellous love of insecurity, who stay at Bruxelles, or even Lille, during this dreadful fermentation. The Duchess of Devonshire is at the latter place; how long she will remain in peace is quite a problematical point. And yet they say the play-houses in Paris fill every night, amidst all the horrors of anarchy and violence; is not this a strong trait of their national levity? It reminds one of the poor fugitives from Calcutta. "*Monsieur par hazard ne voudoit il pas une petite chauson?*"

My Eastrey friends join in best regards to you; they leave me *next week*, and then I shall prepare for London. Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

Deal, *September* 27, 1790.

My dear Friend,

L'EMBARRAS des richesses, &c. says M. Bonomi, are not the only things capable of interrupting the leisure of either town or country. A hundred little vexatious difficulties, and *contre-tems*, though they would make a very insignificant figure in the relation, are equally sufficient to engage the time and attention of little people, with the more splendid avocations that occupy those of larger fortune. This I have known, to my cost, ever since I left London; but such is the condition of this "worky-day world," and we must get through our perplexities as well as we can. The only important point is endeavouring to act properly one's own part.

I have lately had an account of poor dear Mrs. Vesey; she grows thinner and weaker, and has quite lost her appetite. Major Vesey was very much affected at the sight of her. She did not speak,

speak, but wrung her hands, and burst into tears. This she frequently does, and probably it arises from a confused feeling of her own melancholy situation. God only knows what is best for us all; and in his own good time will remove her gentle spirit from its present uneasy confinement.

Have you seen Norman Tales, written I know not how many centuries ago? I just looked into them; but was very soon tired. Surely one would think there was a lamentable defect of nonsense in these our days, to render it necessary to dig out the nonsense of former ages. As to the manners of the times, they are to be found in so many other writings, that I think little or no information is to be gained in that respect from these foolish stories.

I rejoice with you in all your domestic comforts; comforts which, of all others, afford the most delightful feeling to the human heart, and which all the pomp and splendour of the world has nothing to counterbalance. May your promising infants profit by every good instruction, and every good example that is offered them, and never disappoint the hopes of such excellent parents.

The harvest is indeed very plentiful, but whether it will produce a reduction in the price

of

of provisions is doubtful. If it does not, those who will be gainers by the divine goodness, will be much to blame if they appropriate this great blessing solely to their own advantage. The luxury of the tenants of great farms, and alas! there are now very few small ones, too naturally renders them rapacious, selfish, and hard hearted, and will consequently induce them to keep up the high price of corn as long as they can; that is the great evil of consolidated farms.

We have three flags flying in the Downs, and a most noble fleet of men of war with the Royal Sovereign at their head; she carries 110 guns. I believe England scarcely ever had so numerous a marine since the time of King Edgar; with this difference, however, that our King George's Royal Sovereign, could, like a dragon of Wantley, swallow up the said King Edgar's whole navy. Indeed our Downs do at present exhibit a very fine spectacle, and my national pride might be disposed to exult, if it was not checked by the awful reflexion, how soon the breath of the Almighty could dash this formidable armament to pieces against rocks, or bury it in sands; or without this, when I reflected how many of the brave fellows who manned this fleet would probably never see home again, my heart sunk at the

miseries of war, and my pride fell. And I firmly hoped that, after making every human effort in our power, we might be convinced of the absolute need there is of divine assistance to secure us success.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

Deal, *December* 15, 1790.

Mr. Burke's book is, indeed, my dear friend, a very noble performance. *O si sic omnia!* I believe his intentions always to have been better than some parts of his public conduct, in which he has been hurried away by the impetuosity of his passions. His principles seem always to be on the side of virtue, though he is sometimes led into expressions that one reads with concern. In this admirable work there is an instance of this kind, where he is speaking of the days of chivalry.

valry *. I refer you to the passage, for, as I have not the book by me, I am afraid to misquote the words, though I perfectly remember the sense, which appears to me of fatal tendency. I feel very much obliged to Mr. Burke for the light in which he has so truly set the revolution society. I am told that some of them have the grace to be extremely ashamed of their proceedings. The friends of Dr. Priestley excuse him, from the rectitude of his intentions. This point is not to be disputed, as it does not fall within the province of human cognizances. But his discourses and his actions tend to sedition, "confusion, and every evil work." One ought charitably to hope, from his character in other respects, that he himself does not foresee the horrid consequences of his own opinions.

I have been reading with much pleasure the "Sicilian Romance." The language is elegant, the scenery exquisitely painted, the moral good, and the conduct and conclusion of the fable, I think, original. Have you read it? And do you

* The passage probably alluded to has been often and justly condemned for its immoral tendency. It is where the supposed intention of the late Queen of France, to destroy herself rather than to submit to indignity, is mentioned with approbation.

know the name of the authoress? I do not. Have you seen the Chalelet depositions, giving an account of the shocking affair at Versailles; there are near three hundred, and it is dreadful to reflect on the horrid facts there stated; and though the examinations are so numerous, I cannot discover any contradiction. Amidst all those shocking scenes the Duc d'Orleans walked along the streets of Versailles, playing with a badine, smiling at the mob, and, in one instance, directed them with his hand which way to turn. I suppose there is not enough proof of his guilt to bring him to trial, but he is universally condemned and execrated by private judgment.

I certainly am acquainted with Capt. and Mrs. Urmstone, and still more with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrance *, with whom I live upon more intimate terms, than with any others in this place. They are very sensible and agreeable, and are my nearest and best neighbours, though we do not play cards together *every* night. I hope to have a cheerful day with them to-morrow, and a rubber if we can get one. Mrs. Lawrance loves cards, though her husband does not, but she can-

* This amiable and respectable old Lady has just now paid the debt of nature, in her 86th year. Mr. Lawrance died a few years before her.

not

not love the odd trick better than she does books, of which she is an insatiable devourer. I had observed the strong resemblance between Capt. Urmstone and Mr. Smelt; though, as you did not till lately know him, I believe I might not mention it.

Poor Miss Bowdler is indeed a great sufferer, it is wonderful, (and nothing but christian piety and resignation can account for it) how she preserves her good spirits, and her pleasant talents of conversation, under so much pain. It cannot be said of her, what Balzac says of himself, that he is "*toujours malade et toujours* "*chagrin.*"

I am sorry you suffer so much from your eyes, but when the weather gets cleared of these fogs, I hope and trust you will get better, and that when I see you, soon after Christmas, I shall find you have quite lost the troublesome complaint.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

Deal, *July* 18, 1791.

INDEED, my dear friend, I could not expect to hear from you amidst such a *tourbillon* of engagements. I received accounts of the splendour of your palace, and of your entertainments, which were mentioned by those who were admitted to them with great admiration and delight. I congratulate you that your bustle is all over, perhaps you think that quite unnecessary. For my own indolent self, a bustle, however pleasant, is still a bustle, and whenever I am engaged in one, which, happily for me is not often, I am always rejoiced when it is over.

I perfectly subscribe to all your encomiums of the Queen and Princesses. I had the honor to be an eye witness of the truth of them two days before I left town, when I received her Majesty's commands to attend her at Chelsea *. I forgot

* At Lord Cremorne's house then, where her Majesty did her the honor of noticing her with much kindness and condescension, during a pretty long interview.

to

to mention this circumstance when I last wrote to you.

I hear, from a private account, that some late transactions have rendered Mr. Pitt unpopular. For my own part, I have so high an opinion both of his political wisdom and of the integrity and steadiness of his character, that I strongly hope he will stand his ground. I shall think it a real calamity to this nation, if he is ever obliged to quit it.

I most sincerely wish Dr. Beattie may find relief from the Bath waters. The health of so sublime a genius, and so good a man, is the concern of a world. I cannot say I was alarmed by any apprehensions of the fourteenth, for I know that as far as human security could prevent mischief, our government had guarded against any tumult. But I felt a very great horror of the general spirit that gave rise to that absurd celebration. Almighty God has so often interposed for the preservation of this kingdom, that on his providence I humbly rely for frustrating the wicked intentions of such as wish to introduce anarchy and rebellion among us, and destroy the happiest establishment that perhaps the world ever saw. It is astonishing that some people, even of sense and virtue, should give any encouragement to the wretches who would contrive our ruin, by praising

ing such execrable performances as Paine's book. Yet these very people would be shocked at the consequences to which that book evidently tends. So little cautious alas! is the greater part of mankind to regulate their conversation, and to guard against the "idle words" that so often involve the world in confusion.

I certainly do feel all the pity you can suppose for the poor King and Queen of France. At present, however, they are in a worse situation than before their attempt to escape. The only difference is, that the Dauphin is some hours of the day put under the tuition of a preceptor. What will be the consequence of the late attempt, no one I suppose can guess. The whole of the Revolution, from beginning to the present stage of its progress, is unequalled in the history of mankind. It is an awful dispensation of divine Providence. That all the bright luminaries of a powerful and splendid empire should at once be totally extinguished, and by instruments which, to mortal apprehension, appear so inadequate to such an event, can be resolved only into the power of Him, "who ruleth in the kingdom of men," and who sometimes awakens our slumbering attention by such astonishing indications of his supreme dominion over the universe.

You made an odd coalition to be sure at your breakfast

breakfast between the pretender's widow and the Duke of Gloucester. A more reputable one however than some we have seen made in our days. I perfectly agree with you about his Royal Highness. I had the honor of being in company with him one day last winter, and he struck me as having very completely the manners of a fine gentleman. Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

Eastrey, *August* 21, 1791.

My dear Friend,

It does not appear to me, any more than to you, that there are any men of distinguished talents and abilities or consequence, to head this marvellous attempt of changing the government and constitution of France; nor does it appear they have any regular plan for a new one. Unhappy nation! What a wicked thing it was to offer to give up Brest to us; but the English government, God be thanked, rejected the detesta-

ble

ble offer, and warned the French to be upon their guard.

There is no doubt much too high a spirit of luxury and extravagance in this nation, but God forbid there should be many such instances as those you mention. In times like these every body should do what they can to help a little, and it is only in retrenching luxuries, and personal indulgences, that that can be done.

The Duke of York is, I hear, most passionately in love with his *future*. By what I learn beauty is not the attraction, so probably the attachment will be the more lasting. It is an odd circumstance, but I believe it is true, that men usually make better husbands, and are more constant to plain than to handsome wives; how is that to be accounted for *?

Have you seen the Life of Tom Paine? I have not; but I am told it represents him as a complete scoundrel. Have you seen M. Necker's account of his administration? It is extremely affected, like every other modern French book; but shews him to be, what indeed every thing else has done, a man of probity and right intentions. What he says on the subject of abolishing the

* Because they are probably chosen for more lasting qualities than mere beauty, ... the attraction therefore remains.

nobility

nobility is most admirable. I am sure you must have been charmed with *Bonner's Ghost.* It is one of the most perfect little pieces I ever saw.

I have been at this place for a fortnight, but go home to-morrow with Lady Holdernesse, who is coming to dine here; I should not have staid so long but we have been in daily expectations of my nephew Montagu from Holland *, where he has been making a tour. I think you must have felt a very interesting kind of pleasure in entertaining a descendant of Madame de Sevigné's. If she has any of the "*sang de Bretagne* †" in her veins, it will operate in rendering her democratical. Adieu.

* This was a tour of uncommon interest from the circumstances of the times. The commotion in France was such as to oblige the Editor to leave Lisle suddenly, and go into Holland, where he met, and occasionally travelled with, numbers of French emigrants.

† Alluding probably to the democratic riots in that province. In the tour above-mentioned, the Editor travelled for several days with some of the emigrant *noblesse* from Bretagne, whose chateaus had been plundered and burnt by the populace, for no alledged reason whatsoever.

LETTER CCLXXX.

Deal, *July* 22, 1792.

I REJOICE, my dear friend, to hear you have again got all your family assembled round you. In this favored nation, God be thanked, people can enjoy their domestic blessings, and look on each other with present satisfaction, and future hope, as secured to them, as far as human security can extend, by the defence of a well ordered government and equal laws. How differently situated are our wretched neighbours. Please God to have mercy on them! Was not you edified by the account of the national deputation to attend the funeral of Paul Jones? If there is any wretch more eminently wicked, more profligate in principles or practice than another, that wretch is entitled to a niche in the temple of honor, erected by this famous National Assembly. Mirabeau, Voltaire, Rousseau, Paul Jones! What a groupe!

Have you ever read a collection of periodical papers, called, "The Speculator," the first volume

lume lately fell in my way, and it pleased me extremely; if you have not read it, do pray get it. I know not who the author, or authors, are, but they appear to me to be writers of uncommon talents. It is said to be written by a set of gentlemen at Oxford. I am pleased with the attempt of bringing the German writers into notice. I wish to know your opinion of an act of a German tragedy, which is translated in one of these papers. I have not seen the original. I have met with the Essay you mention, on the "Happiness of the World to come," and I read it with great pleasure. Do you know by whom it was written? It is called a translation, but I should suppose great part of it to be original. It was sent to me, but I know not to whom I am obliged. A friend has sent me a copy of Mrs. Charlotte Smith's "Ode to a Poppy." It is very beautiful, and, I am told, the best thing in her new novel; but perhaps my informant is prejudiced against it, from its being too favourable to democratical principles. I have not seen Miss Williams's second book on the French affairs. Her first was very prettily written; and, though too democratical in its principles, according to my system of politics, those principles were exprest with decency and moderation. I find she has been in England for a short time, but is returned to

France. As for Miss Smith she seems to be making *amende honorable* to the aristocracy, for her mother's Desmond. I like the mixture of English and French blood as little as you do. So really the Convention have *denounced* the English government and Mr. Pitt, and have moreover declared the said Mr. Pitt, an enemy to the human species. If one was not so much shocked by their wickedness, one should be diverted by their nonsense. I have an acquaintance just come from Calais, who mentioned a strong instance of the characteristic savage cruelty of the French. A guillotine, which travels from town to town, as occasion may require, was brought to a place where twelve prisoners were to be executed the next day. The mob were so impatient to see the operation of this pretty play thing, that they dragged three of the prisoners out, and made them shew the amusing effect of it that very night.

We have had in the Downs this week the delightful spectacle of seven East India ships safe arrived. They were accompanied by two French prizes, East India ships likewise, which were taken by the frigates which convoyed our's. What constant blessings have we to be thankful for!

LETTER CCLXXXI.

Deal, *October* 20, 1792.

It is no wonder you should have been so much alarmed by a report which, if it had been true, must have been such a dreadful event to this country. May God in his goodness long preserve our most excellent Sovereign to us! Though it is very true, that neither as a nation, nor as individuals, do we deserve the uncommon blessings that we enjoy, yet I humbly hope that we are not in general a profligate people; and what, I trust, will recommend us to the divine favor, by far the greater part of us, are happy and thankful for a mild and legal government, and a good king.

Are not you edified by the Duke of Orleans who has asked *permission* of the National Assembly to change his family name to *L'egalité*, and his family seat to *le jardin de la Revolution*; and it is accordingly *decreté*. It is always well for the world when bad people do something to render themselves eminently contemptible. The

Bishop

Bishop of Arles was murdered in the last horrible massacre. He was one of the best informed ecclesiastics in all France; his manners and moral character were unblemished, and remarkably gentle. But innocence and virtue has no plea against a proscription.

When Tom Paine embarked from Dover, he was treated with the utmost indignity by the populace. I am glad their violence went no further than words, for God forbid we should follow the example of Paris. Enough was done by outrageous abuse to show the spirit of the people, and to terrify the wretch who trembled, and was as pale as ashes, and hurried on board the vessel as fast as he could. I heartily wish all his adherents had embarked with him. I was in company the other day with a French Bishop, who landed at this place. He mentioned a friend of his at Paris who had been a most violent democrat, but now most earnestly wishes for the arrival of the Duke of Brunswick; and probably this is the case with many more who, at the beginning, had no idea of the horrors of a Revolution.

I have received a letter, giving an account of the strange escape of a lady from Dieppe to Brighthelmstone; it has quite the air of a novel adventure. She is the wife of a Mr. Charles Noailles. She was disguised like a sailor, and hid

hid for a day in the hold of the packet covered up with ropes, where she really felt the rats crawl over her. Some of the Dieppe democrats came on board to search for her, and absolutely touched the ropes that covered her, but the place being very dark they called for candles, and on being assured there were not any on board, they went on shore to get some; and the Captain seized the opportunity of setting off full sail, and brought her safe to Brighton. She had but one single shift with her, and in that, and Lady Clermont's powdering gown, she dined the next day with the Prince of Wales.

Had the Duke of Brunswick's army ever reached Paris, it probably would only have hastened the destruction of the unhappy Royal Family. If they were but safely out of the reach of their merciless persecutors, I could wish that the French might be left to their own devices without any foreign interference. The natural consequences of their own folly and wickedness would doubtless be their quarrelling with one another; for such a system as they have framed, it is hardly possible should stand.

I hope there is no danger that the democrats in this country can ever carry their bad designs against all the people of rank, and property, and principle, and common sense, who, I trust, form

the far greatest part of this nation. Though we have alas! many faults, we have not renounced our God, nor blasphemed the religion by which he has enlightened us, and therefore we may humbly hope, that he has not devoted us to destruction. There is no oppression in our government, nor any such perversion of the blessed equality of our laws, as enables the great to crush their inferiors. And, therefore, what reason can there be to wish for a change! There was alas! too much for the unhappy country, which a revolution, formed on a wicked plan, has thrown into such a miserable state of injustice and bloodshed.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

Deal, *November* 1, 1793.

I CONDOLE with you, my dear friend, on the death of your old and faithful porter. The loss of an excellent servant is a real misfortune. It does not often happen that good places want good servants, and bad ones do not deserve them.

It

It always gives me a disadvantageous opinion of those who throw out unlimited abuse on a body of people so extremely useful to their superiors, and who have bad servants, for no other reason than because they are bad masters and mistresses. Let each one mend themselves, and the world would be infinitely better than it is.

I was much delighted, some little time ago, to read the character, that was given by an officer to his mother, of his Royal Highness the Duke of York. Not a soldier was suffered to injure the peasants, who pursued their occupations without molest or depredation, and in full security. This example of his Royal Highness does him great credit, and is a general good, and must be particularly useful to the two young Princes who are under his care. I have heard that Marat was killed by a woman. That such a murderous wretch should fall by his own wicked example is no wonder; but one could have wished the blow to have been inflicted by the sword of justice, and not by the poniard of an assassin.

So the poor Queen of France is at last released from her long sufferings. Her detestable persecutors seem to have exhausted their invention to embitter the final stroke of their malice by every insult that could, in the eyes of the mob, degrade

illustrious birth, and exalted rank. But their barbarity can inflict no more; and she is escaped from the wicked trial of a French convention, to a tribunal of justice and mercy. I am told that Mrs. Wolstoncroft and Miss Williams are put under confinement; I should like to know if they and the rest of the English democrats in the same situation, still continue their high encomiums on the blessings of French liberty.

I am reading a history of Spain, in three volumes octavo, which, if you have not seen, I will venture to recommend to you. It is well arranged, and written in a lively agreeable manner. You may, perhaps, think the style is too much studied; but upon the whole I think you will like it. The author's name is not mentioned, but it is the same person who, not long since, published a history of France, which I have heard very much commended. I believe there was not before any complete history of Spain in English.

All the time Mr. Pitt has been at Walmer Castle, he has had a military guard, which certainly was very proper, as the Castle is a good way from the village; and, though the Downs were full of men of war, a French boat might land in a dark night, and carry off the most important prize the lords of misrule have ever taken.

If,

If, as they say, Mr. Pitt is an enemy to the *human* species, he is certainly not, however, an enemy to *them*, for to no such species, do they appear to belong.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

Deal, *September* 28, 1794.

I THOUGHT with you, that Herman of Unna was very dull, but it is interesting from giving what, I suppose, is a true account of that most horrid institution *the secret Tribunal.* Is it not strange that any people should for so many ages, from Charlemagne to Maximilian, have supported a tyranny from which no one could be safe, by any precaution, and every man was liable to be stabbed by his best friend. But I found it impossible to rest my belief of such an institution on the credit of a novel. I had a confused idea that it was a fact, and being determined to know, I wrote

I wrote to consult Lady Bell Polwarth * from whom I never fail to receive a satisfactory answer to all lawful questions. Her Ladyship sent me an Abrigée of the History of Germany (in the manner of the President Henault) where this extraordinary tribunal is mentioned at full length. When Charlemagne had converted the Saxon General Vitikind to Christianity, or rather perhaps beat him into the profession of it, he instituted this secret tribunal for preserving the purity of the faith. In time it extended its jurisdiction to civil affairs, and subsisted till the reign of Maximilian. It is no wonder it should then vanish before that illumination, which was beginning to diffuse itself over the darkness of Europe.

The French faction in Holland seems to be so powerful, that little hope of success appears from that quarter. Such an impenetrable cloud hangs over the fate of Europe, as baffles all conjecture as to the event. The only consolation is, that all is in the hands of God, and that all will be concluded at last, with the most perfect wisdom and goodness. The merciful interposition of his providence, in the discovery of the conspiracies and plots that have been formed against us, affords, I

* Now Countess de Grey.

humbly

humbly trust, a reasonable ground of hope, that He will extend his protection to this highly-favored nation. May we all be sensible of the blessings we enjoy, and endeavour to render ourselves less unworthy of them.

Have you read a late decree of the Convention, in which it is declared, that they will not make any provision for *any kind* of worship. The philosophers of France far outstrips any heathens, ancient or modern, of whom we have read or heard, who all, in their several forms, paid some kind of homage to a God. These things make every thinking mind tremble; what will it end in? All principles, divine and human, set at defiance; one can only pray that the God whom they despise, may still take pity on them, and turn their hearts from such horrid impiety and wickedness.

We had last week, in the Downs, the delightful sight of seventeen East India ships safely arrived. How great are our public blessings! All our trading fleets safely secured to us, and the nation enjoying uninterrupted possession of every thing most valuable and dear; while in all the countries around us, are exhibiting the most shocking scenes of robbery and murder, and general devastation. What an account from Geneva! Such are the

execrable

execrable effects of French principles, from which may God, in his infinite mercy, ever defend this kingdom.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

Deal, *July* 7, 1795.

WHAT almost unexampled conduct and courage have been exerted by our naval commanders, and their brave sailors! What a friend of mine justly calls the victorious retreat of Admiral Cornwallis, was a *chef d'œuvre,* perhaps unprecedented in our marine history. To raise our admiration of this great man the higher, during the action he had the gout in his arm and leg. It has pleased God to bless our endeavours by sea, with most glorious success, I know not whether you will agree with me in what I have always wished, that all our expeditions were confined to our navy, and that we had nothing to do with the Continent. Here we usually fail. Our gallant soldiers

soldiers are sacrificed to no purpose, and we are the dupes of faithless allies *.

I know not whether you may have heard that neither Lord nor Lady Stanhope were near any of the doings in St. George's Fields. The flower of the *gentry* assembled there, I am told, was an apothecary. God be thanked, that all went off very quietly, much to the disappointment, no doubt, of this *well-disposed* people who collected such an army of ragamuffins. Thus God frustrated the evil designs of these democrats.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

Deal, *September* 21, 1795.

It grieves me to find, that the eyes which you could so profitably employ, continue in so weak a state. But your general health will

* In the latter years of the war, at least, this has not been the case. Our allies have been loyal and faithful, and the gallantry of our soldiers has not been exerted in vain.

certainly

certainly profit by the encreased quantity of air and exercise that this temporary inconvenience obliges you to take. I am, I thank God, much better than I was, yet not much worth, though now I am able to walk a reasonable distance. I got up this morning, and "helped Hyperion to his horse," for I had walked near a mile before he was mounted. There is something inexpressibly delightful to me in an autumnal morning. The elements are all tranquillity, and seem to be reposing after they have finished their work of dispensing the blessings of heaven on the inhabitants of the earth.

You enquire into the situation of the Fagel family. The Greffier and his brothers are at Hamburgh. His Lady remains in Holland, which, it is supposed, may have been of use to their affairs, as their property is not yet confiscated, only sequestered. The Russian fleet, they say, is to winter at Portsmouth, for which we of this place are very glad; for it is not pleasant to have their sailors walking about the streets, not that they are guilty of any bad behaviour, but because they are so very dirty, that it is quite disagreeable to come in their way.

I had a letter lately from Lady Herries, who has most unexpectedly recovered the power of walking, which her physician ascribes to the use of

of viper broth. Her general health remains as it was, and she has received no benefit from the baths of Valdagno. Miss Bowdler is, upon the whole, much better, but not yet well enough to encounter an English winter.

I am obliged to you for Miss More's admirable ballad, though happily we have little use for it in this place, where there has not been the least symptom of a disturbance. I am sorry you were stopped in reading Madame Roland.

It is happy for your poor neighbours that you have both the power, and the inclination to relieve them. In many parts of England the present scarcity must be most severely felt. In this town where there are above six thousand inhabitants *, I have not been able to discover that there is any one person in particular distress; I mean beyond the usual objects of relief. The Downs is generally full of shipping, which gives much employment, and circulates a great deal of money. It would rejoice every benevolent heart, if those who earn it, had but sense and virtue

* The population of Deal afterwards, in 1811, had risen to nearly, or quite, 8000. It is now decreasing, and the town has its full share of the distress of the times, which, to the credit of the inhabitants, is borne without murmuring, or disaffection.

enough

enough to save it, for less profitable times. But alas! the luxuries of dress here, as well as in other places, consumes more than the common necessaries of life. The chief pressure of dearth and scarcity falls on those who have limited incomes, incapable of any improvement, and who are not in a situation to make their wants known; no money is better bestowed, than with delicacy to relieve the wants of those; that is a luxury which the opulent alone can enjoy in any great degree, though all may help a little.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

Deal, *December* 18, 1796.

Many thanks, my dear friend, for your anxiety about me; I am getting better, but still very much emaciated; the weather is against me; for, after so long a confinement, I dare not go out, and I almost fear I shall not be able to join

you in town till very late in the season. My skin, at one time, reminded me of the Scotch song

"Tak your auld cloke and wrap about ye."

My auld cloke, however, now begins to fill up a little, and I hope I shall soon regain my usual *embonpoint.*

I see by the papers that Mr. Fox threatens Mr. Pitt with an impeachment. Surely these patriotic orators have very short memories, or suppose that others have: I think I recollect, that this same Mr. Fox threatened Lord North with the same vengeance, and then coalesced with the very man, whom he had reprobated in the most outrageous terms.

Have you seen the "Negro Slaves," a drama, elegantly translated from the German, by a lady, whom you know, and who has made herself mistress of that difficult language with astonishing rapidity. I was much surprized yesterday on receiving a little pamphlet, containing a French translation of some of my poems, by a Monsieur le Conte de Bedée. Has this gentleman the honor of your acquaintance? As far as I have been able to read, for indeed I can read but little of any thing, the translation is excellent. I wish you would read it.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

Deal, *June* 23, 1797.

My dear Friend,

Your social parties will now, I hope, be more cheerful, by the happy return of our mutinous ships to their duty. This joyful intelligence was conveyed to us by our telegraph. What infinite reason have we to be thankful that our enemies were not in a condition to profit by our distractions! On Saturday last, a boat, with several delegates, going, it is said, to France, was seized by one of our cutters, and the men secured. Probably the most guilty of the mutineers will be duly punished. Bad as they have been, the secret instigators of these unhappy wretches are still worse, and it is greatly to be wished that their wicked machinations may be dragged into open light.

Like you I never was so much alarmed by any circumstance of our political situation, as by the horrid mutiny of our sailors. It may teach us humility, and to place but little confidence in our

our own resources, when, what we considered as our greatest human defence, was turned against ourselves. It has pleased God that this alarming danger should be sooner over than could have been expected, and most happily so. One shall be glad when the whole business is at an end, for it is shocking to think of the number of miserable wicked poor wretches, who must suffer for the general safety. Our government is too mild, not to shew *all* the mercy that can properly be exerted, but, it must be hoped, that such as are the least guilty, and escape capital punishment, may be entirely banished from the country, which they have endeavoured to destroy.

What a shocking thing it is to see, in almost every news-paper lately, an account of some wife running away with a gallant, from her husband! Lord Kenyon, who seems to set his face most laudably against all wickedness, it is to be hoped will help to put a check to these sad doings, by making the culprits pay dearly for their offences, as has been done in a late case; for if people have not religion enough, or do not practice what they have been taught; if the fear of God, or future punishment, will not restrain them from evil, it is fit they should feel where they are most vulnerable; and it may please God, that the loss of their

money,

money, which they love so well, as giving them the means of all luxuries, may turn their hearts to that God, whom, by their conduct, they seem to despise.

Our soldiers here, as well as every where else, persevere in unshaken loyalty, and offer a reward for discovering the authors of the hand bills, which have, by night, been thrown into the barracks to seduce them from their duty. I never could have supposed that a time would come, when I should have looked on a soldier with complacency and respect, and abhorred the sight of a sailor. Indeed the military are now entitled to the esteem and gratitude of their country. All our people in this town are remarkably well affected, excepting a very few whom the loyal party have hung in effigy for being suspected of seditious principles. Indeed, I hope, there is good reason to believe that the nation in general is unseduced by all the wicked endeavours, that have been used to seduce the people *.

Do pray let your reader entertain you with a

* These observations may probably remind the reader of our own times, to which they seem remarkably applicable; and which, we hope, by the blessing of God, will end in a similar manner.

novel called *Plain Sense*, it was recommended to me by Lady Cremorne, who is usually a most determined enemy to books of this kind. It is most admirably well written and very interesting.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

Deal, *September* 3, 1799.

INDEED your description of the present state of the world is but too just. "All the foundations of the earth are out of course." Happily we know, that there is one, who can still the tempests both of the natural and moral world. Amidst all the melancholy accounts which we read and hear, we have cause for the utmost thankfulness, that the spot which we inhabit, has been so graciously favored by heaven, as to experience so small a share of the general confusion. Our laws and liberties remain unviolated, our public worship uninterrupted; and, amidst all the uncom-

mon state of the elements, the divine goodness gives us "fruitful seasons," and there is every where an appearance of great plenty.

Have you read Mr. Vaillant's second expedition into the interior parts of Africa? If you have, however, you may have been entertained with his descriptions, I am persuaded you must have been shocked, that a man who had encountered so many hardships and dangers, should never express the least sentiment of gratitude to God, for his preservation, and indeed he seems to be as totally void of religion, as the poor ignorant Hottentots, &c. whose characters he so greatly admires. Perhaps nothing so totally alienates the mind from God, as savage life. Amidst all the corruptions of civilization, a general diffusion of illumination must keep up a certain degree of dependence of the creature on the Creator, which seems to be totally annihilated in countries ignorant of all information. Very greatly are these to be pitied; but what excuse can be made, for persons who, like Mr. Vaillant, are born under happier auspices, and suffer "the light that is in them to become darkness."

Have you read Mr. Erskine's speech at the Boddington trial? If not, I beg you will. I believe you will find it one of the noblest pieces of eloquence,

eloquence, that ever was composed by any orator, in any age, or country. It is printed in the Times, and in the Sun, at length; in the other papers it is most miserably abridged.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

Deal, *September 2*, 1799.

We have been in a great bustle in this place, by the embarkation of a numerous body of troops. Our Deal boatsmen volunteered their services to put them on board; which they effected with so much regularity and dispatch, as quite astonished the commanding officer. It made me melancholy to reflect how many would probably never return to their families, and their country. The news in the paper to-day has not helped to raise my spirits on this subject, as I find that five hundred men have fallen on the taking of the Helder,

Helder, and I am told to my very great concern that Sir James Pulteney is wounded. I have written to enquire particulars, and hope to hear it is not dangerously. From all the opportunities I have ever had of being acquainted with him, I never knew a more amiable character. He left this place in the first embarkation. Lady Bath accompanied him to the shore, and afterwards dined with me. She behaved with the greatest propriety, but, I believe, was most deeply affected; she was taken ill on her road to London, and obliged to stop two days, but, I hope, she is by this time, safe with her father.

LETTER CCXC.

Deal, *December* 9, 1799.

I FIND the Dutch seem to treat their late defeat very cavalierly. But this will not lessen its importance to us. The French threaten our ruin in a style of pride and arrogance, condined

formable to all their proceedings. But, I trust, the same Almighty Power, who has so often delivered us in a manner more wonderful, than I believe was ever experienced by any nation, except that of the children of Israel, will still continue the same protection over us, and frustrate the proud boastings of our enemies.

I was lately reading some of Shakespear's Plays. Can you guess what should induce Bishop Warburton, and, I think, some other commentators, to think that the three dramas of Henry the VIth were not his. To my apprehension, these plays bear all the characteristic marks that stamp the genius of Shakespear. The singularity of his language, his nice discrimination of the persons, the undeviating fidelity with which they are supported, &c. &c. I wish to know what you, who have proved yourself the most accurate and judicious of all his commentators, think of this strange suspicion.

Do you not admire the curious French proposal of transporting an army in balloons? Surely they must have great confidence in the friendship of the "prince of the power of the air." But happily, the Power, who, I humbly trust, will be our protection, is infinitely superior *.

* A great many of the later letters have been omitted, as not

not containing any thing particularly interesting. The correspondence became less frequent in the latter years of Mrs. Montagu's life, who died in 1802, in consequence of the almost complete failure of her eye-sight; a circumstance mentioned by her, in one of her last letters to Mrs. Carter, in a very affecting manner, saying that the last use she would make of her eyes should be to write to her.

THE END.

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